THE FATHERS: OR, The Good-Natur'd Man.

A COMEDY.

As it is Acted at the THEATRE ROYAL, IN DRURY-LANE.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND.

M DCC LXXVIII.

(Price One Shilling and Six Pence.)

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Comedy now publiſhed, was written by the late Henry Fielding ſome years before his death. The author had ſhown it to his friend Mr. Garrick; and entertaining a high eſteem for the taſte and critical diſcernment of Sir Charles Williams, he afterwards delivered the manuſcript to Sir Charles for his opinion. At that time appointed Envoy Extraordinary to the court of Ruſſia, Sir Charles had not leiſure to examine the play before he left England. Whether it has had the honour to travel with the Envoy into Ruſſia, or was left behind, that it might not interfere with the intrigues of the embaſſy, we cannot determine. Sir Charles died in Ruſſia, and the manuſcript was loſt.

As Mr. Fielding had often mentioned this affair, many enquiries were made, after his deceaſe, of ſeveral branches of Sir Charles's family, but did not produce any tidings of the Comedy.

About two years ago Thomas Johnes, Eſq; member for Cardigan, received from a young friend, as a preſent, a *tatter'd manuſcript play*, bearing, indeed, ſome tokens of *antiquity*, elſe the preſent had been of little worth, ſince the young gentleman aſſured Mr. Johnes, that it was "a damn'd thing!"—Notwithſtanding this unpromiſing character, Mr. Johnes took the dramatick foundling to his protection with much kindneſs: read it: determin'd to obtain Mr. Garrick's opinion of it; and for that purpoſe ſent it to Mr. Wallis, of Norfolk-ſtreet, who waited upon Mr. Garrick with the manuſcript, and asked him, if he knew whether the late Sir Charles Williams had ever written a play?—Mr. Garrick caſt his eye upon it—"The loſt ſheep is found!—This is Harry Fielding's "Comedy!" cry'd Mr. Garrick, in a *manner* that evinced the moſt friendly regard for the memory of the author.

This recognition of the play was no ſooner communicated to Mr. Johnes, than he, with the moſt amiable politeneſs, reſtored his foundling to the family of Mr. Fielding.

Two gentlemen, of the moſt diſtinguiſhed dramatic talents of the age, have ſhewn the kindeſt attention to the fragment thus recovered. To the very liberal and friendly aſſiſtance of Mr. Sheridan, and to the Prologue and Epilogue, written by Mr. Garrick, is to be attributed much of that applauſe with which the public have received the

Fathers; or, The Good-Natur'd Man.

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TO HIS GRACE THE

DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND,

LORD LIEUTENANT

OF THE

COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX,

AND

MASTER OF THE HORSE

TO THE KING.

MY LORD,

THE author of this play was an upright, uſeful, and diſtinguiſhed magiſtrate for the County of Middleſex; and by his publications laid the foundation of many wholeſome laws for the ſupport of good order and ſubordination in this metropolis, the effects of which have been, and now are, forcibly felt by the public. His ſocial qualities made his company highly entertaining. His genius ſo univerſally admired, has afforded delight and inſtruction to thouſands. The memory of ſuch a man calls for reſpect; and to have that reſpect ſhewn him by the great and praiſe-worthy muſt do him the higheſt honour.

Under theſe circumſtances this little orphan poſthumous work, replete with humour and ſound ſenſe, looks up to your grace for protection, as a nobleman who makes rank and affluence anſwer the great purpoſes of diſplaying true dig-

nity and beneficence. Thus adorned by accompliſhments, and enriched by manlyſentiments, it is the intereſt of ſociety to join with me in the warmeſt wiſhes for the continuance of your Grace's health, and of all thoſe powers ſo liberally and ſo conſtantly exerted by your Grace for the good of mankind.

I have the honour to be,

MY LORD,

Your Grace's

Reſpectful and

Obedient Servant,

Brompton-Place.

JOHN FIELDING.

Dramatis Perſonæ.

Sir GEORGE BONCOUR,	by	Mr. KING.
Mr. BONCOUR,		Mr. BENSLEY.
Young BONCOUR *(his ſon)*		Mr. WEBSTER.
Old VALENCE,		Mr. PARSONS.
Young VALENCE *(his ſon)*		Mr. WHITFIELD
Old KENNEL,		Mr. BADDELEY.
Young KENNEL *(his ſon)*		Mr. DODD.

WOMEN.

Mrs. BONCOUR,	by	Mrs. HOPKINS.
Miſs BONCOUR,		Miſs YOUNGE.
Miſs VALENCE,		Mrs. BADDELEY.

PRO-

PROLOGUE.

Written by Mr. GARRICK, and ſpoken by Mr. KING.

WHEN from the world departs a ſon of fame,
His deeds or works embalm his precious name;
Yet not content, the public call for art,
To reſcue from the tomb his mortal part;
Demand the painter's and the ſculptor's hand,
To ſpread his mimick form throughout the land:
A form, perhaps, which living, was neglected,
And when it could not feel reſpect, reſpected.
This night no buſt or picture claims your praiſe,
Our claim's ſuperior, we his ſpirit raiſe:
From time's dark ſtore-houſe, bring a long-loſt play,
And drag it from oblivon into day.
But who the Author? need I name the wit?
Whom nature prompted as his genius writ;
Truth *ſmil'd on* Fancy *for each well-wrought ſtory,*
Where characters, *live, act, and ſtand before ye:*
Suppoſe theſe characters, various as they are,
The knave, the fool, the worthy, wiſe, and fair,
For and againſt the Author pleading at your bar.
Firſt pleads Tom Jones—*grateful his heart and warm;*
Brave, gen'rous Britons---*ſhield this play from harm:*
My beſt friend wrote it, ſhould it not ſucceed,
Though with my Sophy *bleſt—my heart will bleed—*
Then from his face he wipes the manly tear;
Courage, my maſter, Partridge *cries, don't fear:*
Should Envy's ſerpents hiſs, or malice frown,
Though I'm a coward, zounds! I'll knock 'em down:
Next, ſweet Sophia *comes—ſhe cannot ſpeak—*
Her wiſhes for the play o'erſpread her cheek;
In e'ery look her ſentiments you read:
And more than eloquence her bluſhes plead.

Now

Now Blifil *bows—with ſmiles his falſe heart gilding,*
He was my foe—I beg you'll damn this FIELDING;
Right Thwakum *roars—no mercy, Sirs, I pray—*
Scourge the dead Author, thro' his orphan play.
What words! (*cries* Parſon Adams), *fie, fie, diſ-*
own 'em;
Good Lord!—de mortuis nil niſi bonum:
If ſuch are Chriſtian teachers, who'll revere 'em—
And thus they preach, the Dev'l alone ſhould hear 'em.
Now Slipſlop *enters—tho' this* ſcrv'ning vagrant,
'Salted my virtue, which was ever flagrant,
Yet, like black 'Thello, *I'd bear ſcorns and whips,*
Slip into poverty to the very hips,
T' exult *this play—may it* decreaſe *in favour;*
And be it's fame immoraliz'd *for ever!*
'Squire Weſtern, *reeling, with* October *mellow,*
Tall, yo!—Boys!—Yoax—Criticks! hunt the fellow!
Damn'en, theſe wits are varmint not worth breed-
ing.
What good e'er came of writing and of reading?
Next comes, brim-full of ſpite and politicks;
His ſiſter Weſtern—*and thus deeply ſpeaks:*
Wits are arm'd pow'rs—like France *attack the foe;*
Negotiate 'till they ſleep—then ſtrike the blow!
Allworthy *laſt, pleads to your nobleſt paſſions—*
Ye gen'rous leaders of the taſte and faſhions;
Departed genius left his orphan play,
To your kind care—what the dead wills obey:
O then reſpect the FATHER'S *fond bequeſt,*
And make his widow ſmile, his ſpirit reſt.

EPI-

EPILOGUE.

Written by Mr. GARRICK, and ſpoken by Miſs YOUNG.

PROLOGUES and Epilogues—to ſpeak the phraſe
Which ſuits the warlike ſpirit of theſe days——
Are cannon charg'd, or ſhould be charg'd, with wit,
Which, pointed well, each riſing folly hit;——
By a late Gen'ral *who commanded here,*
And fought our bloodleſs battles many a year!
'Mongſt other favours were canferr'd on me,
He made me Captain of Artillery!——
At various follies many guns I fir'd
Hit 'em point black, and thought the foe retir'd,—
But vainly thought—for to my great ſurprize,
They now are rank and file before my eyes!
Nay to retreat may even me *oblige;---*
The works of Folly ſtand the longeſt ſiege!
With what briſk firing, and what thunder-claps,
Did I attack thoſe high-built caſtles---caps!
But tow'ring ſtill, they ſwell in lofty ſtate,
Nor ſtrike one ribband to capitulate;—
Whilſt beaux behind, thus peeping, and thus bent,
Are the beſieg'd, behind the battlement:
But you are conquerors, Ladies—have no dread,
Henceforth in peace enjoy the cloud-cap'd-head!
We ſcorn to ape the French, *their tricks give o'er,*
Nor at your rigging *fire one cannon more!*
And now ye Bucks, *and* Bucklings *of the age,*
Tho' caps are clear, your hats ſhall feel my rage;
The high-cock'd, half-cock'd, quaker, and the ſlouch,
Have at ye all!---I'll hit you, though ye crouch;
We read in hiſtory—one William Tell,
An honeſt Swiſs, *with arrows ſhot ſo well*

On

On his ſon's head, he aim'd with ſo much care,
He'd hit an apple, and not touch one hair:
So I, with ſuch-like ſkill, but much leſs pain,
Will ſtrike your hats off, and not touch your brain:
To curſe our head-dreſs! an't you pretty fellows!
Pray who can ſee thro' your broad-brim'd umbrellas?
That pent-houſe worn by ſlim Sir Dainty Dandle!
Seems to extinguiſh a poor farthing candle---
We look his body thro'---But what fair ſhe,
Thro' the broad cloud that's round his head can ſee?
Time was, when Britons *to the boxes came,*
Quite ſpruce, and chapeau bas! *addreſs'd each dame.*
Now in flapt hats, and dirty boots they come,
Look knowing thus---to every female dumb;
But roar out—Hey, Jack! *ſo,* Will! *you there,*
Tom?
Both ſides have errors, that there's no concealing;
We'd low'r our heads, had but mens' hearts ſome feeling.
Valence, *my ſpark, play'd off his modiſh airs,*
But nature gave us wit to cope with theirs;
Our ſex have ſome ſmall faults won't bear defending,
And tho' near perfect, want a little mending;
Let Love *ſtep forth, and claim from both allegiance,*
And bring back caps *and* hats *to due obedience.*

THE

THE FATHERS: OR, The Good-Natur'd Man.

ACT I.

Scene a Parlour in Mr. BONCOUR'S *Houſe.*

Enter BONCOUR *and Mrs.* BONCOUR.

BONCOUR.

PRAY be pacified ——

Mrs. BONCOUR.

It is intolerable, and I will never ſubmit to it.

BONCOUR.

But, my dear!

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Good Mr. Boncour, leave off that odious word; you know I deteſt it; ſuch fulſome ſtuff is nauſeous to the ears of a woman of ſtrict virtue.

BONCOUR.

I don't doubt your virtue.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

You don't——I am very much oblig'd to you, indeed; nor any one elſe, I apprehend: I thank Heaven my carriage is ſuch that I dare confront the world.

BONCOUR.

You miſtake me, Madam.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

That is as much as to ſay I have not common underſtanding; to be ſure I can't comprehend any thing.

BONCOUR.

I ſhould be ſorry to think I had given you any reaſon to be out of humour.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Then I am in the wrong; a wife is always in the wrong, certainly; it is impoſſible for a wife to be in the right in any thing.

BONCOUR.

BONCOUR.

My dear, I never ſaid ſo.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

That is as much as to ſay I don't tell truth: I deſire you will treat me with good manners at leaſt; that I think I may expect. A woman of virtue, who brought you a fortune, may expect that.

BONCOUR.

Madam, I eſteem you for your virtue, and am grateful to you for your fortune; I ſhould bluſh if you could upbraid me with laviſhing it on my own pleaſures, or ever denying you the enjoyment of it.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

How! have I a coach at my command? you keep one, indeed, but I am ſure I have no command of it.

BONCOUR.

Indeed you wrong me.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Why, have you not lent it this very morning without my knowledge?

BONCOUR.

My dear I thought the chariot would have ſerv'd.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

How can that ſerve when I am to take three other ladies with me.

BONCOUR.

Who 's there ?

Enter SERVANT.

Bid John take the chariot to my couſin, and let the coach attend my wife—I aſk your pardon, child ; I own I ſhould have told you of it, but buſineſs really put it out of my head.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Well, and ſuppoſe I ſhould find but one of the ladies at home, muſt I drag about a heavy coach all over the town, like an alderman's or a country juſtice of peace's lady ?

BONCOUR.

Nay, ſince you are ſo unreſolv'd—the promiſe was not abſolute ; you ſhall not be uneaſy on any account——Tell the fellow he need not go to my couſin at all—(*exit Servant*) now, my dear, you may have your choice, and I hope you will be eaſy.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Eaſy ! yes ; I have a great deal of reaſon to be eaſy, truly ; now your relations, if they have not the coach, will lay the whole blame upon me ; ſure never was ſo unfortunate a creature as I am ! ——no, let them have both, and then they will be

be ſatisfied; I dare ſay I ſhall find a coach amongſt my acquaintance, though you deny me your's.

(*Exit.*

BONCOUR.

So! this comes of meddling with matters out of my ſphere; but I deſerve it, who know her temper ſo well.

Enter Sir GEORGE BONCOUR

Sir GEORGE.

Brother, good morrow, I hope no accident hath happened, for I met my ſiſter in a violent hurry at the door.

BONCOUR.

No, nothing extraordinary: wives will have their humours, you know.

Sir GEORGE.

Aye, wives who have ſuch huſbands.

BONCOUR.

I hope I give her no occaſion to be uneaſy.

Sir GEORGE.

Indeed you do— You are a very wicked man, brother.

BON-

BONCOUR.

How!

Sir GEORGE.

For you have ſpoilt a very good ſort of a woman; you have many an uneaſy hour, many a heart-ache, many a ſigh, and many a tear to anſwer for, which you have been the occaſion of to my poor ſiſter.

BONCOUR.

I don't remember I ever deny'd her any thing.

Sir GEORGE.

That is the very reaſon; for what can a poor woman be oblig'd to conſult, ſo unſteady as her own inclinations? if you would contradict her a little, it would prevent her contradicting herſelf. A man pretends to be a good huſband, and yet impoſes continually that hard taſk upon his wife, to know what ſhe has a mind to.

BONCOUR.

Brother, I admit rallery, but I ſhould contemn myſelf, if I refuſed any thing to a woman who brought me ſo immenſe a fortune, to which my circumſtances were ſo very unequal: I do not think with the world, that I make a woman amends for robbing her of her fortune, by taking her perſon into the bargain.

Sir

Sir GEORGE.

I would not have you rob her; I would only have you keep her from robbing herſelf. Ah! I ſhould have made an excellent huſband, if I could ever have been perſuaded to marry.

BONCOUR.

Doubtleſs, your wife would have agreed rarely with this doctrine.

Sir GEORGE.

She muſt have been a moſt unreaſonable woman elſe; for I ſhould have deſired no more of her than only to do whatever I would have her. I am not that perſon you would make me appear; for, except a few diverſions which I have an antipathy to, ſuch as muſic, balls, cards, plays, operas, aſſemblies, viſits, and entertainments, I ſhould ſcarce ever deny her any thing.

BONCOUR.

Your exceptions put me in mind of ſome general pardons, where every thing is forgiven except crimes.

Sir GEORGE.

I ſuppoſe you would have me ſuffer her to keep an aſſembly, and rendezous of all ſuch idle people as can't ſtay at home; that is, have nothing to do any where elſe.

BONCOUR.

Perhaps I love an aſſembly no more than you.

Sir GEORGE.

Why do you keep one then?

BONCOUR.

For the ſame reaſon that I do many other things not very agreeable to me, to gratify my wife.

Sir GEORGE.

But, brother, pray for what purpoſe do you think the law gives you a power to reſtrain her?

BONCOUR.

Brother, the law gives us many powers, which an honeſt man would ſcorn to make uſe of.

Sir GEORGE.

So the advantage you receive from your wife's fortune, is to be her ſteward, while ſhe lays it out in her own pleaſures.

BONCOUR.

And that no inconſiderable one.

Sir GEORGE.

No!

BONCOUR.

No: for the greateſt pleaſure I can enjoy is that of contributing to her's.

Sir

Sir GEORGE.

You are a great deal too good for this world, indeed you are; and really, conſidering how good you are, you are tolerably lucky; for were I half ſo good, I ſhould expect, whenever I returned home, to catch my wife in an intrigue; my ſervants robbing my houſe; my ſon married to a chamber-maid; and my daughter run away with a footman.

BONCOUR.

Theſe would be ill returns to your goodneſs.

Sir GEORGE.

That's true: but they are very common ones for all that; and I wiſh ſomewhat worſe does not happen to your ſon; for I muſt tell you, and I am ſorry to tell it you, the town talk of him.

BONCOUR.

I hope they can ſay nothing ill of him.

Sir GEORGE.

Nothing ill of him! they ſay every thing ill of him—O brother, I think myſelf obliged to diſcover it to you,—this ſon, this eldeſt ſon of yours, the hopes of your family, whom I intended my heir; this profligate raſcal, I tell it with tears in my eyes—keeps—keeps—a wench.

BONCOUR.

I know it—

Sir GEORGE. (*in a paſſion.*)

Know it!—wh—at—that he keeps a wench?

BONCOUR.

I am ſorry for it.

Sir GEORGE.

If he was a ſon of mine, I'd ſkin him—I'd flea him—I'd ſtarve him. He ſhall never have a groat—a farthing of mine: I'll marry to-morrow, and if I hav' n't an heir, I'll endow an hoſpital, or give my money to the Sinking Fund.

BONCOUR.

Come, brother, I am in hopes to reclaim him yet.

Sir GEORGE.

His vices are all owing to you.

BONCOUR.

I never gave him inſtructions in that way.

Sir GEORGE.

You have given him money, that is giving him inſtructions: whoever gives his ſon money, is anſwerable for all the ill uſes he puts it to.

BONCOUR.

Rather, whoever denies his ſon a reaſonable allowance, is anſwerable for all the ill methods he is forced into to get money.

Sir GEORGE.

Reaſonable! brother: why there is our difpute; I am not ſo rigid as ſome fathers; I am not for totally curbing a young man; I would not have him without

without a ſhilling or two in his pocket to appear ſcandalous at a coffee-houſe—no.—

BONCOUR.

Sir George, inſtead of diſputing longer on this ſubject, will you go with me and viſit my ſon:—ſuppoſe we ſhould find him at his ſtudies?

Sir GEORGE.

I as ſoon expect to find him at his prayers.—Well, I will go, as I have no other buſineſs; though I know the world better than to expect either to convince myſelf or you.

BONCOUR.

I am ready to wait on you; my coach is at the door.

Sir GEORGE.

If I ſhould break the raſcal's head, you'll forgive me—Keep—I'd keep him if he was a ſon of mine. (*Exeunt.*

Scene at Young BONCOUR'S.

Young BONCOUR, *Miſs* BONCOUR, *Miſs* VALENCE, *come forward.*

Young BONCOUR.

Dear ſiſter, how could you let this inundation of nonſenſe in upon us?

Miſs BONCOUR.

Nay, don't blame me.

Miſs VALENCE.

O, I was a witneſs to what paſſed; however, now they are gone, I muſt remind you of your promiſe, to let me hear that ſong. I think both the words and air admirable.

Miſs BONCOUR.

You will make George proud if you praiſe his poetry.

Young BONCOUR.

Love or poverty makes moſt poets; and I hope I ſhall never want at leaſt one of thoſe motives—as Mr. Warbler is gone, I will attempt it myſelf.

SONG,

By G. BONCOUR.

I.

While the ſweet bluſhing ſpring glowing freſh in her prime,
All nature with ſmiles doth adorn;
Snatch at each golden joy—check the ravage of time,
And pluck every bud from the thorn.
In the May-morn of life, while gladſome and gay,
Each moment, each pleaſure improve,
For life we ſhall find is at beſt but a day,
And the ſun-ſhine that gilds it is love.

II.

The roſe now ſo blooming, of nature the grace,
In a moment is ſhrunk and decay'd,
And the glow which now tinges a beautiful face
Muſt ſoon, alas! wither and fade.

In

In the May-morn of life then, while gladſome and gay,
Each moment, each pleaſure improve,
For life we ſhall find is at beſt but a day,
And the ſun-ſhine that gilds it is love.

Enter BONCOUR *and Sir* GEORGE.

Young BONCOUR.

My father! and uncle too—ſo, ſo!

BONCOUR.

Dear George, don't let us interrupt your entertainment; your uncle and myſelf called only to ſee how you did, as we went by. If I had known you had had company, we ſhould not have come up—Pray go on with your muſic.

Young BONCOUR.

Sir; you are always the kindeſt and moſt condeſcending——but from you, Sir, this is an unexpected honour.

Sir GEORGE.

Dear Sir, moſt obliging, and moſt gracious Sir, ——you do me an infinite deal of honour——indeed——you ſee he is at his ſtudies, brother.——

BONCOUR.

Pray, George, don't let us interrupt your entertainment.

Sir

Sir GEORGE.

Upon my word my nephew ſhews an exceeding good taſte in his morning diverſions.

Young BONCOUR.

Yes, Sir, theſe ladies have been ſo good as to hear a ſilly trifle of my own writing.

Sir GEORGE.

I am ſorry we came too late, for I think nonſenſe is never ſo agreeable as when ſet to muſic.

Miſs BONCOUR.

The muſic my brother deſign'd for me and this lady; and I doubt not if he had had any expectation of your company, my dear uncle, he would have provided ſome more ſerious entertainment.

Sir GEORGE.

Upon my word, Sir, you have a very pretty houſe here, compleatly finiſhed and furniſhed—— when I was a young fellow we had not half ſo good a taſte.

Young BONCOUR.

No, Sir, the age is improv'd ſince that time—when a knight of the ſhire uſed to jog to town with a brace of geldings, and a ſingle livery-man; and very prudently take a firſt floor in the Strand, when if you aſk'd in the ſhop for Sir Thomas, a dirty fellow, behind the counter, call'd out, maid, is Sir Thomas above?—I dare ſwear, uncle, in your time, many a tradeſman hath had half a dozen men of faſhion in his houſe.

Sir

Sir GEORGE.

If he had nine men of faſhion in his houſe, he had fewer in his books, I believe.

Miſs BONCOUR.

And once in ſeven years came up Madam in the ſtage-coach, to ſee one comedy, one tragedy, go once to the opera, and rigg out herſelf and family till the next general election, ha! ha! ha!——

Sir GEORGE.

Well, Miſs Malapert, and what do you think you have ſaid now? why, nothing more than that your grandmothers had ten times as much prudence as yourſelves.

Enter Servant haſtily.

SERVANT.

Sir, I aſk pardon. I thought your honour had been gone.

BONCOUR.

Speak out, Sir.

SERVANT.

Sir, there be below Monſ. de Pannier, with a new ſuit; and Monſ. de la Mouton Maigre, with ſome embroidery for your honour.

Sir GEORGE.

There is another virtue of the age! if you will be extravagant—can't you let your own tradeſ-

men

men reap the benefit of it? is it not enough to ſend your money out of your own family, but you muſt ſend it out of your own country too!

Young BONCOUR.

I conſider nothing farther than who ſerves me the beſt.

BONCOUR.

I muſt join your uncle here, George,—I am afraid it is faſhion rather that guides you to the choice; but, were it otherwiſe, every man ought to have ſome partiality for his own country; it is a laudable prejudice, without which, no people ever were or can be great.

Sir GEORGE.

It ever was the characteriſtick of this nation—but now a paſſion for French dreſs and fopperies is as prevailing as the uſe of their frippery tongue ——Ah! there was a time, when we found the way to be underſtood in France, without the help of their language—(*looks on his watch*) but I have trifled away more time than I could well afford: ſhall I carry you any where, brother, or will you ſtay here?

BONCOUR.

Have you any engagement, George?

Young BONCOUR.

None, at preſent.

BON-

BONCOUR.

Then, brother, I wiſh you a good morning. I have ſome buſineſs with my ſon.

Sir GEORGE.

Good morrow to you, brother.—Pray, Sir, will you order ſome of your domeſticks to ſhew me out of theſe noble apartments, for there are ſo many doors to them, I may poſſibly miſs my way.

Young BONCOUR.

I will do myſelf that honour, Sir.

Sir GEORGE.

Upon my ſoul, Sir, you are ſo full of complaiſance you confound me; nay, Sir, pray walk firſt, I inſiſt upon it.

Young BONCOUR.

Sir, it is my duty to obey.

Sir GEORGE.

Extravagant raſcal! if I had ſuch a ſon, I would make a little free with his coxcomical pate.

BONCOUR.

I wiſh, child, you would take that young lady away, for I have ſomething to ſay to your brother.

Miſs BONCOUR.

La, Papa, you are always ſo full of ſecrets!

BONCOUR.

You know, dear Harriet, how fond I am of your company.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Yes; eternally ſending me away is a proof of it.

BONCOUR.

This is a diſobedience which I ought to love you for, inſtead of chiding you; and I will break

an appointment to enjoy this evening with you and your brother.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Nay, I can't promiſe to be at home this evening, for I ſhall be engag'd to go to the play, and if I ſhould not happen to go to the play, I ſhall be engag'd to a party at cards.

Miſs VALENCE.

Miſs Boncour, you muſt remember your promiſe to ſet me down at home; my time is out and I dare not ſtay one minute beyond it.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Dare not? ha! ha! ha!

Miſs VALENCE.

No; my father will never forgive me if I ſhould.

Enter young BONCOUR.

Young BONCOUR.

I have got my uncle into his chariot at laſt; but he was ſo full of ceremony I thought I never ſhould; he has made fifty bows to my ſervants; I never ſaw him in ſuch a humour.

BONCOUR.

You know his temper, George, and may eaſily gueſs at the reaſon of it.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Well, if you are ſo poſitive——

Miſs VALENCE.

Don't call me poſitive—I act againſt my inclination.

Young BONCOUR.

Are you going already, Madam——you will do me the honour—— (*Exit, leading her out.*

BON-

BONCOUR (*alone*)

How wretched is that animal, whoſe whole happineſs centers in himſelf; who cannot feel any ſatisfaction, but in the indulgence of his own appetite. I feel my children ſtill a part of me; they are, as it were, additional ſenſes, which let in daily a thouſand pleaſures to me; my enjoyments are not confin'd to thoſe which nature hath adapted to my own years, but I can in my ſon's fruition, taſte thoſe of another age——nor am I charitable but luxurious, when I beſtow on them the inſtruments of their pleaſures.

Enter young BONCOUR.

So, George, you have ſoon quitted the young lady.

Young BONCOUR.

I was going to make that excuſe for leaving you ſo long.

BONCOUR.

You have been a good huſband this quarter.

Young BONCOUR.

Sir; you are always ſo good as to prevent my neceſſities, and almoſt my wiſhes; for indeed I ſhould have been obliged ——

BONCOUR.

I thought a hundred would not be burthenſome. (*Giving him a note.*

Young BONCOUR (*bowing reſpectfully with a ſmile*)

A hundred! Gad, it is but a hundred.

BONCOUR.

What are you conſidering, George?

Young BONCOUR.

I was thinking, Sir, how happy ſuch a ſum as this would have made me when I was at ſchool; but really, in my circumſtances, it will go a very little way; it will but juſt pay for a picture which I bought yeſterday.

BONCOUR.

A hundred pounds is a large price for a picture.

Young BONCOUR.

A meer trifle, Sir; one can get nothing to hang up in a room for leſs.

BONCOUR.

I only give that hint, becauſe I ſhould be ſorry that your demands ſhould ever be ſuch, as I ſhould be unable to anſwer.

Young BONCOUR.

I am not ſuch a ſtranger to your fortune, Sir, as to incur expence beyond its reach.

BONCOUR.

No more of this! call on me by-and-by, and your wants ſhall be ſupplied; but, I believe, you gueſs by the formality of my preparation, and my ſending away your ſiſter, that I have ſomething of moment to impart to you—without more preface—what think you of marriage?

Young BONCOUR.

Marriage, Sir!

BONCOUR.

Aye: I don't expect your good ſenſe will treat my propoſition with the common ſtale rallery of thoſe noble free ſpirited libertines, whoſe great ſouls diſdain to be confined within the limits of matrimony: who laugh at conſtancy to the chaſte arms of a woman of virtue, while at the expence of

of health and fortune they are ſtrictly faithful to the deceitful embraces of ſome vile deſigning harlot.

Young BONCOUR.

Pardon me, Sir: my thoughts of marriage are different; but I hope, Sir, you will indulge me in chooſing a wife for myſelf?

BONCOUR.

You need not apprehend too much compulſion or reſtraint; but the lady I ſhall recommend to you is ſo unexceptionable——

Young BONCOUR.

To be ſincere, Sir, my affections are already engaged; and though I have no haſty thoughts of marrying, yet when I do, I am determined on the perſon, and one whom I think unexceptionable on your ſide.

BONCOUR.

Her name?

Young BONCOUR.

Miſs Valence.

BONCOUR.

Her fortune, I apprehend, is much inferior to that of the lady I ſhould have propoſed; but neither her fortune or family are ſuch as ſhall make me endeavour to oppoſe your inclinations.

Young BONCOUR.

Sir, you are ever good; though indeed in this you indulge me only in the common right which nature has beſtowed upon me; for to reſtrain the inclination in that point, is not a lawful, but an uſurp'd power in a parent: how can nature give another the power to direct thoſe affections which ſhe has not enabled even ourſelves to govern?

BON-

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BON-

BONCOUR.

However, you will give me leave to treat with Mr. Valence on this ſubject; for though I know he muſt rejoice at the offer, yet he is a man of that kind, who muſt be dealt with, with due circumſpection; and the minds of lovers are too much wrapt up in ſublime pleaſures to attend to the low ſettlement of worldly affairs.

Enter Servant.

SERVANT.

Sir, Monſieur Valance deſire to know if your honour be at home.

Young BONCOUR.

I ſhall be glad to ſee him.

BONCOUR.

I'll leave you, and go and find out the old gentleman.

Young BONCOUR.

I believe, Sir, you may treat with him farther than for me; my ſiſter's inclinations, I am confident, look toward the ſame family.

BONCOUR.

Are you certain of that?

Young BONCOUR.

By inconteſtable proofs.

BONCOUR.

Well, Mr. Valance and I have been old acquaintance and neighbours; he is of a good family, and has a good fortune; and the world gives him and his children a fair character. I am glad you have diſpos'd of your affections in no worſe manner: good morrow to you, George—I ſhall ſee you in the afternoon.

Young

Young BONCOUR.

I ſhall not forget to pay my duty to you, Sir.

BONCOUR.

No ceremony with me. (*Exit.*

Young BONCOUR.

Sir. (*bows*) I believe I have the moſt complaiſant father in Chriſtendom. Though all fathers are too niggardly—This ſneaking hundred; ha! ha! ha! my dear Valance, good morrow:

Enter Young VALANCE.

Why look you ſo ſprightly and gay? ſome unexpected happineſs has befallen you.

Young VALANCE.

O Boncour, my father! can you believe it? he ſent for me this morning, of his own accord, without the leaſt petition, the leaſt motion of mine, ſent for me, and with the utmoſt generoſity, made me a preſent of ten pieces——

Young BONCOUR.

Ha! ha! ha!

Young VALANCE.

Why do you laugh?

Young BONCOUR.

To ſee you ſo much over rate a trifle. My father paid me a viſit this morning, and with the utmoſt generoſity made me a preſent of a hundred: upon which, with the utmoſt gratitude, I asked him for more! why, tell me, Charles, doſt thou think it is not his duty, who hath begot us with all thoſe appetites and paſſions, to ſupply them to the utmoſt of his power? But, Charles, I hope you will make your friends partakers of your father's generoſity: you will dine with us to day.

Young

Young VALANCE.

Your company is generally too expenſive for me.

Young BONCOUR.

Why, faith, the world is grown to ſuch a paſs, that without expence, a man cannot keep good company.

Young VALANCE.

By good company, I ſuppoſe you mean embroider'd company; for men of ſenſe are to be come at cheaper.

Young BONCOUR.

By good company, I mean polite company, for true politeneſs, though it does not make a man of ſenſe, it mends him.

Young VALANCE.

But does politeneſs never dine without a French cook, nor eat out of any thing but plate?

Young BONCOUR.

To ſhow you I think otherwiſe, I will dine with you, wherever you pleaſe.

Young VALANCE.

Why, my buſineſs with you was, to let you know my father has been ſo good to give my ſiſter leave to ſpend this day at your houſe; now, if you will, without ceremony, let me invite myſelf to the ſame place——

Young BONCOUR.

You make me perfectly happy, and I hope to know ſomething this afternoon which will make you ſo; at leaſt, if you wiſh to call me brother as eagerly as I do to call you by that name.

Young VALANCE.

Need I declare that to you?

Young

Young BONCOUR.

Then I aſſure you, your father's conſent is only wanting.

Young VALANCE.

Ha!—you make me happy, indeed, for were the alliance leſs advantageous, he is ſo good, ſo indulgent, I will fly to him and throw myſelf at his feet to obtain it.

Young BONCOUR.

I believe my chariot is at the door; I will carry you—O, my dear Charles, my ſpirits are now ſo high, that it muſt be an uncommon accident which will ruffle them; and, believe me, the vaſt delight which the near proſpect of enjoyment of my love affords me, is not a little heightened by the expectations of ſeeing you alſo happy in your wiſhes; and I can look down with contempt on the merchant, who ſees the anchor caſt to his ſhip; the general who has juſt obtained a victory; or the deſpairing miniſter who has juſt carried his point, and ſubverted the deſigns of his enemies. (*Exeunt.*

End of the Firſt ACT.

ACT II.

A Room in VALENCE's *Houſe.*

Enter Old VALENCE *and Servant.*

Old VALENCE.

TELL Mr. Boncour I ſhall be glad to ſee him. What can this formal viſit mean? I hope he has not diſcovered the intimacy between our children: if I could once compaſs that double marriage, I ſhould compleat my wiſhes, why not? For I know the violent paſſion of the young people, and the extreme indulgence of the father: but tho' he is a weak man, it is impoſſible he ſhould give his conſent; the diſparity of fortune is too great; well! but, as he has brought up his children to hate, and deſpiſe him, perhaps they may not aſk it; no, it would make me too happy.

Enter BONCOUR.

BONCOUR.

My good old friend and neighbour, how do you do?

VALENCE.

Mr. Boncour, I am heartily glad to ſee you; this is extremely kind, and hath prevented me this very morning paying you that viſit, which I have been obliged to owe you ſome time againſt my inclination.

BONCOUR.

BONCOUR.

Ceremony between old friends, my good neighbour is ridiculous; it is the privilege of friendſhip and love, to throw aſide thoſe forms, which only ſerve men to keep an appearance of affection where there is none; there has been a long acquaintance and intimacy between our families.

VALENCE.

There has been ſo, indeed, and highly to my ſatisfaction.

BONCOUR.

I am deceived, my very good old friend, if there are not ſome who wiſh a much cloſer alliance; you know, Mr. Valence, my way hath been always to diſcover my ſentiments, without great formality of introduction; in ſhort, I have diſcover'd a very particular intimacy between our younger branches; I am miſtaken if they are not deſirous to knit the alliance ſtill cloſer.

VALENCE.

So! (juſt what I fear'd.) [*Aſide.*

BONCOUR.

But you know, my old friend, the views of young people, and of their parents in matrimony are extremely different; theirs is only the ſatisfaction of an immediate paſſion, ours look forward to their future happineſs.

VALENCE.

Sir, I am ſurpriz'd at what you tell me,
[*Confuſedly.*

BONCOUR.

BONCOUR.

Why ſurpriz'd? it is but a natural affection.

VALENCE.

It is an affection, Sir, which I never encourag'd in them.

BONCOUR.

It is in our power, Mr. Valence.——

VALENCE.

I ſhall be very ready to contribute mine, I aſſure you; I ſcorn to connive at my children's ſtealing a match into any family, particularly my friends: I do aſſure you, I ſhould ſcorn it.

BONCOUR.

I believe, indeed, you wou'd—But——

VALENCE.

If I had had but the leaſt ſuſpicion—if ſuch a thing had ever enter'd into my thoughts, you ſhould have known it that moment.

BONCOUR.

I am convinc'd, but give me leave—perhaps the advantage may be ſomewhat of your ſide.

VALENCE.

Dear, Sir, the whole world knows how infinitely it is ſo; but I am not like the world in all reſpects; I am not ſo devoted to my intereſt to do a mean thing; I would not do a mean thing for the world.

BONCOUR.

Nor am I ſo like the world to place my own, or my children's intereſt in riches only, or rather to ſacrifice

ſacrifice their happineſs to my own vanity: I am willing when they have taken out a licence, that they ſhall have no more to do with Doctors Commons, for which reaſon I will neither marry my daughter to a ſpindle ſhank'd beau, nor my ſon to a rampant woman of quality. Mr. Valence, our children love each other; and their paſſions, if encourag'd, may make them happy; my buſineſs with you, my neighbour, is not to fruſtrate, but to compleat their attachments; in a word, what think you of a double marriage between our families?

VALENCE. (*Surpriz'd*)

Sir!——

BONCOUR.

Are you willing it ſhould be ſo?

VALENCE.

Are you in earneſt?

BONCOUR.

I thought you had known me too well to ſuſpect me of jeſting on ſuch an occaſion; I aſſure you I have no other buſineſs here at preſent: I know my ſon's happineſs is wrapt up in your daughter, and for ought I know, my daughter may have the ſame affection for your ſon; I do not only therefore propoſe the match to you, but I do it with earneſtneſs.

VALENCE.

Do you? Why then, for that very reaſon, I ſhall put on ſome backwardneſs; eagerneſs is always to be taken advantage of. (*Aſide.*

BONCOUR.

Be not ſurpriz'd, perhaps, there may be ſome advantage in point of fortune on one ſide or other:

if

if it ſhould be on mine, I can never give it up better than to an old friend.

VALENCE.

Hum—That eſtate of mine in Northumberland is a very good eſtate, and very improveable, let me tell you it is an eſtate that ——

BONCOUR.

It will be the buſineſs of hereafter to conſider each particular; we have been neighbours to each other ſo long, that our affairs in general can be no ſecret to either. At preſent I ſhould be glad of your direct anſwer.

VALENCE.

A double marriage between our children! It is a matter, Mr. Boncour, which will require great conſideration.

BONCOUR.

Aye! ——

VALENCE.

Are you certain your ſon has ſo violent an affection for my daughter?

BONCOUR.

I am certain.

VALENCE.

And that your daughter has the ſame liking towards my ſon.

BONCOUR.

Women are not ſo open on theſe occaſions, but I have reaſon to believe it.

VALENCE.

VALENCE.

And they meet, I ſuppoſe, with a ſuitable return of affection from my children.

BONCOUR.

I believe they do.

VALENCE.

And you are entirely willing to have this double match go forward?

BONCOUR.

I am deſirous of it, earneſtly deſirous.

VALENCE.

So that my conſent alone is wanting?

BONCOUR.

Even ſo.——

VALENCE.

It will require great conſideration.

BONCOUR.

How?

VALENCE.

Mr. Boncour, I have always had the greateſt reſpect for you and your family; there is nothing in my power which I could not do to ſerve you; conſider, Sir, I have but two children, a boy and a girl, they are my all, and the diſpoſal of them is as a matter of great weight; you cannot expect me to be ſo haſty in taking any meaſures leading to it.

BONCOUR.

Why, what objections can you apprehend?

VALENCE.

VALENCE.

I dont know:—I have not yet conſidered enough of the matter.—You will excuſe me, Mr. Boncour, but treaties of this nature oblige us to enquire a litte into one anothers affairs: why that eſtate now of your's in Hampſhire, is a very ill timber'd eſtate.

BONCOUR.

Sir, I am in no doubt but that my eſtate will be able to anſwer your demands.

VALENCE.

They will not be unreaſonable, Mr. Boncour; I ſhall act in a moſt generous manner; I have always deſpiſed thoſe who have uſed any art in their actions: I ſhall be glad if it happens to fall within my power to oblige you; but truly this affair requires great conſideration.

BONCOUR.

Well, Sir, I will leave you to it, in the afternoon I ſhall expect your anſwer.

VALENCE.

Mr. Boncour, you ſhall have my anſwer this very evening; be aſſured, if poſſible, I will comply with your deſires.

BONCOUR.

I ſhall expect you this afternoon.

VALENCE.

I will wait on you, and hope there will be no difficulty.

BONCOUR.

There ſhall be none on my ſide.—— *(Exit.*

VALENCE.

This is beyond my utmoſt expectation;—but I muſt not appear forward, that I may make the better bargain;—nothing is ſo fooliſh as leaping eagerly at an advantageous propoſal.

Enter

Enter Young VALENCE.

So, ſon, where have you been? I have wanted you; is it impoſſible for you to ſtay at home with money in your pocket?

Young VALENCE.

Sir, if I had known you would have wanted me——

VALENCE.

But you are not to know always: I don't know myſelf, you muſt keep in the way; young fellows now a days mind nothing but their pleaſures.

Young VALENCE.

Sir, you will have no reaſon to complain of that, for to pleaſe you is my greateſt pleaſure.

VALENCE.

And ſo it ought to be, for I think my generoſity to you this morning, ſhews you that I have a pleaſure in pleaſing you.

Young VALENCE.

O, Sir, if my happineſs can give you pleaſure, it is in your power to make me ſo happy!——

VALENCE.

So, ſomething elſe is wanted, I ſee, but whatever it be, I may thank myſelf for it: beſtowing one favour, is giving right to aſk a ſecond; the firſt is a gift, the reſt are payments.

Young VALENCE.

If a ſon hath any right to aſk, it is the favour I ſhall aſk of you; and if any ſon could hope to obtain, I muſt, ſince the only reaſon which prompts a father to deny is in my favour, and the lady on whom I have placed my affection, is my ſuperior in fortune.

VALENCE.

Aye! perhaps, he means my friend's daughter, and then my prudent backwardneſs will be finely rewarded; (*aſide*) who is the lady?

Young VALENCE.

One whoſe perſon, family, and fortune, are no unknown to you; but, why ſhould I fear to name her? Miſs Boncour.

VALENCE.

Who—What?

Young VALENCE.

Miſs Boncour, ſure you can have no objections.

VALENCE.

What a way is that of talking? You are ſure I can have no objections? How can you tell what objections I may make? Are you to dictate to me? This is the conſequence of my generoſity to you this morning; this all ariſes from my fooliſh prodigality.

Young VALENCE.

Sir, I own my obligations, and am ſorry I uſed an unguarded expreſſion, by which I meant no more than that I hoped her fortune would be agreeable to you.

VALENCE.

I don't know that.

Young VALENCE.

I thought, Sir, ſo long an acquaintance with her father ——

VALENCE.

And, pray, why have you thought that my long acquaintance with her father muſt let me into the knowledge of his circumſtances? Mr. Boncour has the reputation of a weak man, but notwithſtanding that, I know he has a little low cunning in him, which makes it more difficult to ſee through his affairs than thoſe of a wiſer man; ſo let me give you a little advice: if you have an affection for this girl, don't let her father ſee it; I hate deceit, and love to act openly and honeſtly with mankind; but ſtill with ſome prudence towards ſuch a cunning knave as Boncour.

Young

Young VALENCE.

Sir, I ſhall pay an exact obſervance to your orders.

VALENCE.

Well, well, perhaps you might have ſettled your affections worſe; I don't know, I don't promiſe any thing, but if matters appear exactly to my mind——

Young VALENCE.

Sir, you are the beſt and moſt indulgent of fathers.

VALENCE.

Remember, I promiſe nothing.

Young VALENCE.

You are the kindeſt of men, and I the happieſt.

VALENCE.

Obſerve my advice.

Young VALENCE.

I ſhould be unworthy, indeed, were I to neglect it.

VALENCE.

Go, ſend your ſiſter to me, remember I promiſe nothing.

Young VALENCE.

Sir, you are the beſt of fathers. (*Exit.*

VALENCE.

This is the effect of ſeverity; ſeverity is, indeed, the whole duty of a parent—now for my daughter—a little caution will ſuffice with her; for women of their own accord are apt enough to practice deceit, and now, I think, I have my old neighbour's fortune at my diſpoſal.

Enter Miſs VALENCE.

Miſs VALENCE.

My brother told me, Sir, you had ſent for me.

VALENCE.

Yes, Sophy, I did: Come hither, I have not very lately given you any pocket money.

Miſs VALENCE.

Sir, it is not my buſineſs to keep an account where I have no demand, but from the generoſity of the giver.

VALENCE.

But I think I have not lately, that is, very lately given you much.

Miſs VALENCE.

No, really, Sir, I don't remember to have had any thing of you, ſince you gave me a ticket for the opera, and that is almoſt a year ago.

VALENCE.

Well, well, t'ere are a couple of pieces for you; be a good houſewife, and you ſhan't want money.

Miſs VALENCE.

I give you a thouſand thanks, Sir.

VALENCE.

Now, Sophy, look me full in the face, and tell me what you think of young Boncour.

Miſs VALENCE.

Why ſhould you aſk me what I think of him, Sir?

VALENCE.

What an impertinent queſtion is that? You give me fine encouragement to be generous to you; why ſhould I aſk you? I have a reaſon, no doubt of it, but your cheeks anſwer me better than your lips; that bluſh ſufficiently aſſures me what you think of him.

Miſs VALENCE.

If I bluſh'd, Sir, it was at your ſuſpicion, for I am ſure Mr. Boncour is no more to me than another man.

VALENCE.

But, ſuppoſe I have a deſire he ſhould be more to you?

Miſs VALENCE.

I ſhall be dutiful to you in all things.

VALENCE.

VALENCE.

I believe it will be an eaſy piece of duty; you are all very dutiful when you are ordered to follow your inclinations; but, young Lady, what I inſiſt on at preſent is, that if this gentleman has your affections, you will be ſo good as to conceal them.

Miſs VALENCE.

Pray, Sir, why ſhould you think he has my affections?

VALENCE.

Again at your why's! madam, I tell you I expect you to behave with diſcretion; that is, in other words, to deal as diſhoneſtly with your lover as you do with your father, I am ſure you can never repine at ſuch eaſy commands; ſo this afternoon, I deſire you will put on all your reſerve, all your airs and indifference: but, perhaps, you have given him encouragement already, perhaps you have dutifully intended to marry him without conſent or approbation of mine?

Miſs VALENCE.

Indeed, Sir, you have no reaſon——

VALENCE.

How, have I no reaſon! a pretty compliment to your father; go to your chamber, madam, and ſtay there till you have learnt a more reſpectful behaviour.

Miſs VALENCE.

Sir, I obey— (*Exit.*

VALENCE.

Ah, there's nothing like ſeverity! children are ſo vile, that one dares not indulge one's good inclinations towards them: I have brought all this on me by my own generoſity; but now for the buſineſs with Boncour, I will go to my lawyer, and we will draw up propoſals together. An imprudent man in my ſituation, would have teſtified immediate raptures, but the beſt general rule I know is, never to diſcover your thoughts, either in your words, or your countenance. (*Exit.*

SCENE

SCENE II.

BONCOUR'S *Houſe.*

Enter BONCOUR, *and Miſs* BONCOUR.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Dear, papa, don't teize me about the fellow: I care not if he was hanged, and all other fellows; I affections for the creature! I wonder who can have put it into your head!

BONCOUR.

Nay, if it be not ſo, tell me frankly, and you ſhall be left out of the treaty which I am carrying on with the old gentleman, relative to a match between your brother and his daughter.

Miſs BONCOUR.

A match between my brother and Miſs Valence?

BONCOUR.

We met this morning, and ſhall meet again this afternoon about it.

Miſs BONCOUR.

And pray tell me, dear Sir, what makes you ſuſpect any thing between me and Mr. I forget the creature's name!

BONCOUR.

Are my ſuſpicions well grounded?

Miſs BONCOUR.

La, Sir, I can't conceive what ſhould make you imagine any ſuch thing.

BONCOUR.

You will not anſwer me directly?

Miſs

Miſs BONCOUR.

I don't know what to anſwer.

BONCOUR.

Nay, I deſire no more! well, my dear, we will not be long in finiſhing the ſettlements.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Settlements! Sir you frighten me. I hope I have not ſaid any thing—can't one converſe and dance with a man—But I aſſure you, Sir, it is no ſuch thi..g.

Enter young BONCOUR.

BONCOUR.

So, George, you find me engaged in an impoſſible taſk.

Young BONCOUR.

I am ſorry for that, Sir, pray what is it?

BONCOUR.

Nothing more than trying to get truth from a woman; it ſeems we have been under a miſtake all this while, and one half of our treaty is abortive; your ſiſter diſavows all regard for Mr. Valence.

Young BONCOUR.

I am glad of it! for I ſhould be ſorry if ſhe threw away her affections on one ſo worthleſs—one who, while he is addreſſing her, is engaged to another woman.

BONCOUR.

How!

Young BONCOUR.

Sir, I have had ocular demonſtration; nay, I queſtion if he be not married already; at leaſt, I am certain every thing is concluded.

BON-

BONCOUR.

Say you ſo; this very well accounts for that backwardneſs which ſurprized me in the father—

Miſs BONCOUR.

Ha! ha! ha!—an affection, indeed!—ha! ha! ha!—no, I aſſure you, Sir, I have no affection—an affection truly;—no, I have all the abhorrence and contempt in the world for him.

Young BONCOUR.

Dear, ſiſter, don't be in a paſſion.

Miſs BONCOUR.

I am in no paſſion, brother; it is impoſſible for a man I hate and deſpiſe, to put me in a paſſion; no, brother, when I know a man to be a villain, I aſſure you, brother, he ſhall never have it in his power to give me uneaſineſs.

Young BONCOUR.

But, my dear—

Miſs BONCOUR.

No, brother, I would not have you think I am in a paſſion on his account; all that vexes me is, that my father ſhould think I had a value for him.

Young BONCOUR.

Well, dear Sir, I believe I need not fear to aſk you the ſucceſs of the buſineſs you was ſo kind to undertake.

BONCOUR.

Upon my word, George, it was ſuch as ſurprized me, till you accounted for it; by this engagement of young Valence's, I think on comparing his circumſtances, I might have expected a more hearty concurrence, but I do aſſure you, the beſt anſwer I could obtain was, that he would conſider of it.

Young

Young BONCOUR.

O, Sir, that was only to leſſen the opinion which he feared you might have the advantageouſneſs of the propoſal; I think I know him ſo well, that he would make an outward difficulty of aſſenting to a point, which inwardly, he heartily wiſh'd to compaſs; eſpecially, when he had no fear of loſing it by ſo doing, as perhaps your goodnatur'd forwardneſs made him ſecure on that ſide.

BONCOUR.

Aye, faith, it is ſurpriſing there ſhould be ſuch fooliſh wiſe men in the world.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Brother, one word with you, who told you this villain was to be married?

Young BONCOUR.

Excuſe me—I cannot tell you.

Miſs BONCOUR.

I would not deny you, brother.

Young BONCOUR.

I ſhould not have curioſity enough to aſk what no ways concern'd me.

Miſs BONCOUR.

But ſuppoſe it did concern me.—

Young BONCOUR.

Is that poſſible?—what, he that never made any addreſſes to you?—

Miſs BONCOUR.

Addreſſes, pugh!—Pſhaw, this is uſing me in a manner I did not expect; I would not conceal a ſecret from you, eſpecially a ſecret of this nature.

Young BONCOUR.

Oh! a ſecret of this nature; now, be honeſt, and tell me why you call'd Valence a villain, and I will diſcover the whole.

Miſs BONCOUR.

A villain! if you knew as much as I, you would think it a term too gentle. Don't imagine I have the leaſt concern at loſing him; but if what you ſay is true, he is the moſt perfidious wicked villain that ever broke his ſolemn vows to a woman.

Young BONCOUR.

Then to be as honeſt and ſincere with you, there is not one ſingle ſyllable of truth in all I have ſaid. I am convinc'd he loves you ſincerely, and ſince I find you return his paſſion with equal ardour—

Miſs BONCOUR.

What do you mean, brother?—

BONCOUR.

Nay, child, 'tis in vain to diſſemble, you are fairly caught.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Well, I proteſt now, this is the moſt barbarous treatment; and ſo the ſtory you rais'd of poor Valence is abſolutely falſe?

Young BONCOUR.

As mere fiction as ever came from a traveller or a news paper.

BONCOUR.

Well, child, I think you need ſay no more to encourage me to include you in the treaty, at leaſt I ſhall take your ſilence for conſent.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Then if I muſt ſpeak—

Young BONCOUR.

Let it be truth for once.

Miſs

Miſs BONCOUR.

The devil take the ſtory—for I never was more frightened by one in all my life.

BONCOUR.

George, I think there will be no farther obſtruction, Mr. Valence will be here this afternoon; and as ſoon as matters can be ſettled by the lawyers, you may depend on your happineſs.

Young BONCOUR.

Here is my mother coming this way; I believe it would be my ſiſter's wiſh, as well as mine, that this affair ſhould be yet a ſecret from her.

BONCOUR.

I think you are in the wrong there; nor am I willing ſhe ſhould be unacquainted with a thing of this nature.

Young BONCOUR.

At leaſt, Sir, till I have the honour of ſeeing you again.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Aye, do, dear Sir.

BONCOUR.

Well, ſo far I will indulge you.

(*Exeunt Young Boncour and Miſs Boncour.*

Enter Mrs. BONCOUR.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Do Mr. Valence's family dine here to day?

BONCOUR.

Yes, my dear.

Mrs BONCOUR.

Very well, then I will dine abroad.

BONCOUR.

As you pleaſe, child, ſince your daughter is at home.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

I know, Sir, it is a matter of indifference to you; but I think you need not affect it — it would be civiller to expreſs ſome regard for me, tho' it was never ſo counterfeit.

BONCOUR.

Would you have me ſay you ſhall not dine abroad?

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Shall not! I ſhould laugh at that indeed!

BONCOUR.

Why, my dear, ſhould I ever diſcover an inclination contrary to your's, by which you muſt be driven to the uneaſineſs of knowing you thwart one or the other? you know, child, concealments of this kind are the greateſt delicacies of friendſhip.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

To be ſure I can conceal nothing, nor I have no delicacy of friendſhip about me; I wonder you would chuſe ſo indelicate a woman.

BONCOUR.

Come, it is happy for you I did chuſe you; at leaſt you might have fallen to the lot of one who would have been leſs obſervant of your temper; ſuppoſe you had been married to my brother Sir George?

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Sir George! why Sir George? I know no man who would make a better huſband.

BON-

BONCOUR.

So he ſays himſelf, and this I muſt confeſs, he would never have had a diſpute of this kind with his wife; for he would have told her peremptorily, madam, I have invited the company, and you ſhall ſtay and dine with them.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Well, and that would have been kinder than indifference; for my part, I aver, I could bear contradiction from a man that was fond of me.

BONCOUR.

What, rather than compliance!

Mrs. BONCOUR.

I am not that fool you may imagine me; I know a little of human nature, and am convinc'd there is no man truly fond of his wife, who is not uneaſy at the loſs of her company.

BONCOUR.

Will it pleaſe you if I order you to ſtay at home?

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Order me! no, truly, if my company be ſo indifferent, that you conſult only my pleaſure in deſiring it, I ſhall never think myſelf oblig'd to you on that account; I thank heaven, I am not every where ſo deſpicable, but that there are ſome weak enough to deſire my converſation, and, perhaps, might prefer it to the agreeable Miſs Valence herſelf.

BONCOUR.

She is a gueſt of my daughter's, not of mine: ſurely, you don't conceive I have any particular pleaſure in Miſs Valence's company.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

O, I am not jealous, I aſſure you, you wrong me mightily if you think I am jealous; ſhe muſt be a poor creature, indeed, who could be jealous of

of every little flirt; no, I ſhould have too much contempt for the man who delighted in the converſation of ſuch flirts; but this I think I might reaſonably expect, that he would enjoy them by himſelf, and not inſiſt of my being of the company.

BONCOUR.

You cannot charge me with any ſuch behaviour, nay, ſcarce with a ſingle deſire that would contradict your inclinations; therefore, when you told me you would dine abroad, I anſwered, juſt as you pleaſe, tho' I knew not the company to be diſagreeable to you.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

But I will not dine abroad, Mr. Boncour, I will dine at home; pray give me leave to know my own inclinations better than you; I am neither a fool nor a child, whatever you may think of me, nor will I be treated as ſuch by any huſband in the univerſe.—What! I ſuppoſe I muſt ſhortly come with my hands before me, and aſk you leave before I do any thing; pray, Mr. Boncour, will you give me leave to make a few viſits this morning?

BONCOUR.

Ha! ha! ha! My dear, did I ever deny you?

Mrs. BONCOUR.

You inſiſt on my aſking then it ſeems, but I aſſure you I ſhall not; I did not part with my fortune, to part with my liberty too, ſo your ſervant. (*Exit.*

BONCOUR.

Well, Sir George is in the right; I have ſpoil'd this woman certainly; for her temper from a good one is now become intolerable; but ſhe brought me a fortune; true, ſhe did, and an immenſe one, and with it, what I took for better and for worſe; and ſo it is idle to complain. (*Exit.*

End of the SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

Scene Mr. BONCOUR'S *Houſe.*

Enter BONCOUR *and Servant.*

SERVANT.

MR. Valence's man left this letter.

BONCOUR.

So! here I ſhall have, I ſuppoſe, my neighbour's ſentiments at large on this important buſineſs. (*Reads the letter.*)

SIR,

I have maturely weigh'd your propoſal; and, to convince you of the deſire I have to an alliance with your family, notwithſtanding ſome offers lately made me, which, to a wordly-minded man, might, perhaps, appear more advantageous, I have conſented to the union between our children, for which purpoſe I have drawn up a few articles, not doubting but you will think them very reaſonable.

Firſt, You ſhall veſt your whole eſtate immediately in the poſſeſſion of your ſon, out of which, beſides your wife's fortune, you ſhall be allotted two hundred pounds per annum during life.

Secondly, You ſhall pay down fifteen thouſand pounds as your daughter's portion, for which ſhe ſhall have a proportionable ſettlement, as our lawyers ſhall agree.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, That as a very large part of my eſtate will, at my death, deſcend to my ſon, I ſhall remain in poſſeſſion of the whole during my life, except——But why ſhould I read any farther? is this man mad, or doth he conclude me to be ſo?

Enter Sir GEORGE BONCOUR.

Sir GEORGE.

I call'd on you, brother, to let you know I ſhall dine with you, for my friend has ſent me word the houſe will ſit late.

BONCOUR.

Oh, Sir George, I am particularly glad to ſee you; I will give you an inſtance that your opinion of mankind is juſter than my own; ſince I ſaw you, I have, to comply with my ſon's inclination, propos'd a match in Mr. Valence's family; could you imagine he would ſend me ſuch a letter as this in anſwer? oh, you need only look at the articles.

Sir GEORGE (*reading*).

Well, what of this?

BONCOUR.

What! can you think the man is in his ſenſes?

Sir GEORGE.

Certainly; for 'tis impoſſible he ſhould ſuppoſe you to be in your's, when you made him the offer to which this letter is an anſwer.

BONCOUR.

But, brother, is my making him an advantageous offer, a reaſon for ſo impudent an impoſition?

Sir GEORGE.

Aye, ſurely, no one can give another a ſtronger hint to impoſe upon him, than by firſt impoſing upon himſelf; you have infinite obligations to him

him, I think, for he ſees you have an inclination to beggary, and therefore would make you a beggar. Beſides, can any thing be more reaſonable than what he propoſes? I am ſure I ſhould not expect ſuch gentle terms in the ſame caſe; what doth he deſire of you more than to throw yourſelf on the bounty of your ſon? well, and who the devil would make any ſcruple of truſting a ſon, eſpecially ſuch a ſon as your's—a fine gentleman—one who keeps a wench—never fear, man, I warrant he'll allow you pocket-money enough.

BONCOUR.

Rallery, Sir George, may exceed the bounds of good-nature, as well as good-breeding; I did not expect that you would have treated the ſerious concerns of my family in ſo ludicrous a manner, nor have laugh'd at me when I aſk'd your advice.

Sir GEORGE.

Zounds! what ſhall I ſay? I thought to have pleas'd you, by calling his demands reaſonable; ſhall I take the other ſide of the queſtion? for, like a lawyer, I can ſpeak on either; he hath taken the moſt prudent way of calling you a fool, and his propoſals ſeem to proceed rather from a deſign of inſulting you, than from any hopes of ſucceſs.

BONCOUR.

It really has that appearance.

Sir GEORGE.

Well, then, and do you want my advice what to do?

BONCOUR.

I ſhall, undoubtedly, reject them with ſcorn, and if myſelf alone were concern'd, I could with eaſe, —but my ſon, I fear, has ſet his heart on the young lady.

Sir GEORGE.

Then break his heart: why what a devil of a fellow is this ſon of your's? he ſets his fortune on one wench, and his heart on another.

BONCOUR.

Come, brother, you are a little too haſty: when we reflect on the follies of our youth, we ſhould be more candid to the faults of our children.

Sir GEORGE.

You are welcome to throw the ſins of my youth in my face: I own I have been as wicked as any, and therefore I would not ſuffer a ſon to be ſo: of what uſe is a parent's experience, but to correct his children; and, give me leave to tell you, you are a very unnatural father, in not ſuffering your ſon to reap any benefit from your former ſins; but you, brother, to obtain the character of a good-natur'd man, are content to be the bubble of all the world.

BONCOUR.

Well, I had rather be the bubble of other mens will than of my own; for, let me tell you, brother, whatever impoſitions knavery puts upon others, it puts greater on itſelf.

Enter Servant.

SERVANT.

Sir, dinner is upon the table.

BONCOUR.

Well, we will defer this affair 'till the afternoon, when I believe my behaviour will pleaſe you.

Sir GEORGE.

It will ſurpriſe me too if it does. [*Exeunt,*

Scene

Scene VALENCE's *Houſe.*

Enter VALENCE *and Servant.*

VALENCE.

Sir Gregory come to town, ſay you?

SERVANT.

He is at the coffee-houſe, and will be here immediately.

VALENCE.

Well, ſhew him up. (*Exit Servant.*) What great affair can have brought him up? who has not, I believe, been in town theſe twenty years: ſomething of vaſt importance muſt have drawn him from his fox-hounds! he hath been ſo long abſent, the town will be a ſight to him, at leaſt he will be a ſight to the town. (*Sir Gregory hallows without.*) He is not far off, I hear.

Enter Sir GREGORY KENNEL.

Sir GREGORY.

Hey a vox, maſter Valence—how goes it, my old friend? you look ſurpriz'd to ſee me in town.

VALENCE.

I muſt confeſs, Sir Gregory, you were one of the laſt perſons I expected to ſee here.

Sir GREGORY.

It is like a fox running againſt the wind: wel', how does madam, and how does your fine ſon do?

VALENCE.

Alas! my wife, poor woman, I have loſt her ſome time; I thought you muſt have heard of that.

Sir GREGORY.

Like enough I may: I can't remember every trifle.

VALENCE.

I hope your family is well, Sir Gregory?

Sir GREGORY.

Why I have loſt my lady too, ſince I ſaw you: ſhe is ſix feet deep, by George; but the boys are all well enough: Frank, he is at home; and Will is at Oxford; and the 'Squire, he is juſt come from his travels.

VALENCE.

And how does maſter Francis? I think he is my godſon.

Sir GREGORY.

Why Frank, Frank is well enow; I would a brought un to town, but the dogs would not ſpare un: he is mightily improved, I can tell you, ſince you ſaw un; he takes a five-bar gate like a grey-hound; but the 'Squire is the top of the pack: I have been at ſome pains in his education; he has made, what do you call it, the tower of Europe.

VALENCE.

What, has maſter Gregory been abroad?

Sir GREGORY.

I think ſo—he hath been out almoſt two years, in France, and Italy, and Venice, and Naples, and I do'nt know where.

VALENCE.

Indeed! why I thought he had been too young to travel.

Sir GREGORY.

No, no; he's old enough, he will be of age in half a year more.

VALENCE.

He is much improv'd by his travels, no doubt on't.

Sir

Sir GREGORY.

Improv'd, aye, that he is—Egad he over tops them all—he was the fineſt gentleman at ſeſſions—I have nothing to do for'n, but marry un to a woman of quality, and get un made a parliament man, and then his fortune is made, then he will be a compleat gentleman; now I have ſecur'd one o' um; I have agreed for a borough, and I fancy, neighbour Valance, you can recommend me to t'other; you converſe with quality; do you know now ever a woman of quality that's very handſome, with a great fortune, that wants a huſband?

VALENCE.

Quality, beauty, and fortune; you are ſomewhat high in your demands, Sir Gregory.

Sir GREGORY.

Why, if ſhe be not handſome, the boy won't like her; and if ſhe have no fortune, I ſhan't.

VALENCE.

But, why quality? what uſe is there in that?

Sir GREGORY.

Nay, I can't tell much uſe in it; but there is ſomething in it to be ſure, for I have ſeen men proud on it in the country, who have nothing elſe to be proud of—Odſure—I fancy they have forgot to direct the boy hither: I left him at the coffee-houſe having his ſhoes clean'd; the dog's grown ſo nice ſince his travels, that he did but juſt ſtep into a kennel, tho' he wan't over the inſtep; the ſhoes o'un muſt be clean'd immediately; I will ſtep and ſee for 'un, and be back with you in an inſtant. (*Exit.*

VALENCE.

If this cub hath no more wit than his father, it will not be difficult to match him to my own daughter.

daughter. He will be a much greater match than young Boncour: this is an effect of my prudence; but I am afraid, as unreaſonable as my demands are to Boncour, folly will make him accept them; if he ſhould, I can raiſe them ſo high, that, even ſo great a fool as he is, will reject them: however, I will be firſt ſure on this ſide.

Enter Sir GREGORY *and Young* KENNEL.

Sir GREGORY.

Here he is; here is the boy; child, this is my friend Mr. Valence.

(Young Kennel runs to Valence, and kiſſes his hand.)

VALENCE.

I am glad to ſee you returned.

Young KENNEL.

Pardie! Sir, your moſt humble ſervant.

Sir GREGORY.

Is not he a fine gentleman? well, Gregory, let us hear a little more of your travels; come, don't be aſham'd before folks, don't—Come, tell us what you—

Young KENNEL.

Dear, old Gentleman, don't give yourſelf any pain on my account: I ſhould have made the tour of Europe to very little purpoſe, if I had any modeſty left.

Sir GREGORY.

Neighbour Valence, do aſk him about pleaces?

VALENCE.

Pray, Sir, how do you like Venice?

Young KENNEL.

Not at all, Egad it ſtands in the middle of the ſea!

Sir GREGORY.

How! no lyes, Greg.—don't put the traveller upon us!

VALENCE.

VALENCE.

Indeed he ſpeaks truth. How do you like the humour, the temper of the Italians?

Young KENNEL.

I don't know any thing of them, for I never would converſe with any, but thoſe of my own country.

Sir GREGORY.

That's right; I would have thee always be a true Engliſhman.

VALENCE.

I ſuppoſe you ſaw Rome, Sir.

Young KENNEL.

Faith, Sir, I can't ſay I ſaw it, for I went extremely late in, and ſtaid there but a week: I intended to have taken a walk or two about town, but happening to meet with two or three Engliſh dogs at our inn—mortblue! I never ſtirr'd abroad till the day I came away.

Sir GREGORY.

What! did'ſt not ſee the Pope of Rome?

Young KENNEL.

No, not I: I ſhould have ſeen him, I believe, but I never heard a word that he was at Rome 'till after I came into France, and then I did not think it was worth going back for: I did not ſee any one thing in Italy worth taking notice of, but their pictures; they are magnifique, indeed!

VALENCE.

How do you like the buildings, Sir, in Italy?

Young KENNEL.

They ſhow'd me ſome old buildings, but they are ſo damnably out of repair, one can't tell what to make of them.

Sir

Sir GREGORY.

Well, Gregory, give us a little account of France: you ſaw the King of France, did not you Greg?

Young KENNEL.

Yes, and the Queen, and the Dolphin; why, Paris is well enough, and the merrieſt place I ſaw in all my travels: one never wants company there; for there is ſuch a rendezvous of Engliſh, I was never alone for three months together, and ſcarce ever ſpoke to a Frenchman all the while.

Sir GREGORY.

There, Mr. Valence, you ſee how unjuſtly they ſpeak againſt our ſending our ſons to travel: you ſee they are in no danger of learning foreign vices, when they don't keep company with foreigners. Well, Mr. Valence, how do you like 'un?

VALENCE.

O, infinitely well, indeed! he is really a finiſh'd gentleman —

Sir GREGORY.

Aye, is he not a fine fellow? But, Greg, you don't tell Mr. Valence half what you told me, about a ſtrange man at Orlines.

Young KENNEL.

You will excuſe my father's pronounciation, as he has never been abroad: he means Orleans, where I ſaw one of the largeſt men I ever ſaw in my life; I believe he was about eight foot high.

Sir GREGORY.

What a misfortune it is not to travel in one's youth: I can ſcarce forgive my father's memory for keeping me at home. Well, but about the King of France.

Young KENNEL.

Zounds! father, don't aſk me ſo many queſtions. You ſee, Sir, what a putt he is. (*Aſide to Val.*

Sir

Sir GREGORY.

Why, you rogue, what did I ſend you abroad for, but to tell me ſtories when you came home.

Young KENNEL.

You ſent me abroad, Sir, to learn to be a fine gentleman, and to teach me to deſpiſe clowniſh fellows.

VALENCE.

Come, Sir Gregory, perhaps the young gentleman will be more open over a bottle; what ſay you?

Sir GREGORY.

You know I never flinch from a bottle; and we will have ſome ſtories after a glaſs. Well, Greg, you know what I came to town about, and this gentleman will aſſiſt us; he will recommend a wife to you.

Young KENNEL.

I am this gentleman's very humble ſervant; but I want none of his aſſiſtance. There is a lady whom I knew before I went abroad, and ſaw again laſt night with another young lady at the play, and mortblue if I marry any other woman.

Sir GREGORY.

How! ſirrah.

Young KENNEL.

Pray, dear old gentleman, don't put on that grum look: rat me', do you think I have made the tour of Europe to be ſnubb'd by an Engliſh father, when I came home again?

Sir GREGORY.

Sirrah, I'll beat the tour of Europe out of you again: have I made you a fine gentleman, in order to deſpiſe your father's authority!——

VALENCE.

Pray, Sir Gregory——

Sir GREGORY.

Sirrah, I'll diſinherit you: I'll ſend your brother Will a travelling, and make Frank a Parliament man in your room.

Young KENNEL.

A fig for your diſinheriting! it is not in your power; if I can but get this girl, I'll marry her, and carry her back to France. There is a good Engliſh company at Bouglogn, as I ever deſire to crack a bottle with—what do you take me for? a boy! and that you are to make me do what you pleaſe, as you did before I went abroad, diable! Do you think to uſe me as you do brother Frank, who is but your whipper in? mortblue, I have been hunting with the King of France.

Sir GREGORY.

If you have been hunting with the devil, I'll make you know I am your father; and, tho' you are a fine gentleman, the ſame pains will make your brother Will as fine a gentleman to the full.

VALENCE.

Pray, Sir, conſider; don't diſoblige your father: come, Sir Gregory, I have order'd a bottle of wine within; let us go and talk over that matter; I dare ſay I ſhall bring the young gentleman to reaſon; come, pray walk in.

Sir GREGORY.

He ſhall obey me, or——

Young KENNEL.

I have travell'd to a fine purpoſe, truly. (*Exeunt.*

Scene BONCOUR'S *Houſe.*

Enter BONCOUR *and Young* BONCOUR.

Young BONCOUR.

Tho' the articles are a little unreaſonable, if you had any compaſſion or love for your children, who you

you know have plac'd their hearts on the match, you would comply.

BONCOUR.

My children are ungrateful, if they upbraid me with want of affection: but this is a meer trick, a poor ſcheme of Mr. Valence's, to take advantage of your paſſions, and my indulgence.

Young BONCOUR.

So, we are ſacrific'd to contention 'twixt our fathers for the ſuperiority of underſtanding.

BONCOUR.

You injure me, ſon; the low dirty reputation of cunning, I ſcorn and deteſt.

Enter Mrs. BONCOUR.

So, Sir, I hear there are marriages going on in the family, which I was not to be acquainted with.

BONCOUR.

Pardon me, my dear; I intended to have acquainted you, and ſhould before, but for a particular reaſon.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

What reaſon, pray?

BONCOUR.

You need not concern yourſelf.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Indeed! not concern myſelf! who am I? have not I an equal concern; aye, and a ſuperior one!

BONCOUR.

But hear me, madam.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

No, I won't hear any thing ſaid for the match; it is below them in family and fortune both.

BONCOUR.

I do not intend ——

Mrs. BONCOUR.

I don't care what you intend; you may keep your reaſons to yourſelf, if you pleaſe; but, as for the double marriage, I will have no ſuch thing; all your plots ſhan't compaſs it.

BONCOUR.

I tell you, it is broke off—there is to be no match.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

How, no match! and pray what was the reaſon you kept it a ſecret from me?

BONCOUR.

Ma'am!

Mrs. BONCOUR.

So; I am nobody in the houſe; matches are made and unmade, and I know nothing of the matter. And why did you break it off?

BONCOUR.

Becauſe his demands were monſtrous—exorbitant beyond credibility.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

And pray what was the reaſon you kept it a ſecret from me? nay, I will know—I am reſolved I will know—won't you tell me?—you are a barbarous man, and have not the leaſt affection for me in the world (*crying*).

Enter Miſs BONCOUR.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Bleſs me, madam, what is the matter?

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Nothing extraordinary; your father has behaved to me like a monſter.

Miſs

Miſs BONCOUR.

La, Sir, how can you vex my mama in this manner.

BONCOUR.

So! ſhe for whom I ſuffer'd all this, is the firſt to accuſe me.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

It ſeems you are to be married without my knowledge.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Married, Madam! to whom, pray?

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Nay, I don't know whether it is to be ſo now; for the ſame wiſe head that made the match, has, it ſeems, broke it off again.

BONCOUR.

Yes, child; Mr. Valence hath been pleas'd from my eaſy behaviour to him, to uſe me in ſuch a manner, and inſiſt upon ſuch terms, that I can't, either conſiſtently with common ſenſe or honour, comply with; now, my dear, you ſee I do not keep all ſecrets from you, examine them yourſelf.

Miſs BONCOUR.

(*Aſide*) So, ſo, ſo! after my affections are engag'd, they are to be baulked, it ſeems: but there ſhall go two words to that bargain.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

I can't ſee any thing ſo unreaſonable in his demands: if the match was otherwiſe good, I ſhould not have broken it off on this account.

BONCOUR.

What! would you ſubvert the order of nature, and change places with your children: would you depend

depend on their duty and gratitude for your bread? and give way to the exorbitant demands of a man, who has made them for no other reaſon, but becauſe I offered him more than he expected, or could have hoped for?

Mrs. BONCOUR.

I ſay his demands are for the advantage of our children, and truly if I can ſubmit to them, you, Mr. Boncour, may be ſatisfied.

Young BONCOUR.

Nay, then, I think it is a good time for me to appear: O, madam, eternal bleſſings on your goodneſs, which it ſhall be the buſineſs of my life to deſerve; O ceaſe not till you have prevailed on his obdurate heart to relent.

Miſs BONCOUR.

I muſt ſecond my brother—Have pity on him, dear mama! ſee how he trembles, his lips are pale, his voice faulters; O conſider what he ſuffers with the apprehenſion of loſing the woman he loves; though my father's cruel heart is deaf to all his ſufferings, you are all goodneſs, all tenderneſs; you, I know, will not bear to ſee him miſerable!

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Why do you addreſs yourſelf to me? there ſtands the good man, who wiſely contriv'd this match, and then with ſo much reſolution broke it off.

Young BONCOUR.

My paſſion, 'till you encourag'd it, was governable—'Twas you, Sir, who bid me hope, who cheriſh'd my young love; and though the modeſty of her ſex may make her backard to own it, my ſiſter's heart is as deeply concern'd as mine.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Thank you, brother, but never mind me:—I had my father's command to give my promiſe, and

and I muſt not obey him if he commands me to break it.

Young BONCOUR.

(*Takes hold of his ſleeve.*) Sir, I beſeech you—

Miſs BONCOUR.

(*Takes hold of the other.*) Dear papa——

Mrs. BONCOUR.

And for what reaſon was this ſecret kept from me?

Miſs BONCOUR.

When he hath put it into his childrens' heads—

Young BONCOUR.

When their whole happineſs is at ſtake.—Then it is into a family of ſo good a character.—

Mrs. BONCOUR.

I muſt take my childrens' parts, and you ſhall conſent, or never ——

Miſs BONCOUR.

I'll never let go your hand—

Young BONCOUR.

I'll never riſe again——

Enter Sir GEORGE BONCOUR.

BONCOUR.

O, brother! you never arriv'd ſo fortunately to my aſſiſtance as now.——

Sir GEORGE.

Why, what's the matter?

BONCOUR.

O, I am worried to death by my wife and my children.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Nay, brother, you ſhall judge if he hath reaſon to complain: he hath, without my knowledge, contracted

tracted a match between Mr. Valence's children and his own; and when the young people had united their affections, truly he hath, of his own wiſe head, broke it off again.

BONCOUR.

You have appeal'd to a very wrong perſon now; my brother knows the whole affair.

Sir GEORGE.

I know, brother! what do I know? if you have broken off the childrens' match, you have done a very ill thing, let your reaſons be what they will.

BONCOUR.

How, brother! are you my enemy too?

Sir GEORGE.

Can you imagine I will be your friend, brother, when you run raſhly of your own head into ſchemes of conſequence without conſulting your wife!—without taking the advice of her, your beſt friend, your beſt counſellor?

Mrs. BONCOUR.

True, dear brother.——

Sir GEORGE.

And then, when you have done ſo, and ſuffer'd a fine gentleman here to engage his precious affections, to fix his conſtant heart, which always doats with the ſame ardour, on the ſame beauteous object.

Young BONCOUR.

True, by heavens!

Sir GEORGE.

And this little bud here, to throw off the veil of her virgin modeſty, and all overſpread with bluſhes and confuſion, to tell an odious man ſhe will have him, which nothing but her duty to you could ever extort from her.

Miſs

Miſs BONCOUR.

True, dear uncle!

Sir GEORGE.

Then, after all this, out of baſe worldly motives, ſuch as ſhould never enter into the thoughts of a good man—

Young BONCOUR.

Too true!

Sir GEORGE.

To diſappoint all their hopes, to ruin all their fair proſpects of happineſs—to throw your wife into an ill humour——

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Monſter!

Sir GEORGE.

To make your ſon here diſtracted?

Young BONCOUR.

Unnatural father!

Sir GEORGE.

To break your daughter's heart!

Miſs BONCOUR.

Cruel! barbarous!

BONCOUR.

Now, madam, wife, children, marry, do as you will——I oppoſe you no longer——a leaf may as well ſwim againſt a cataract——

Mrs. BONCOUR.

But why keep it a ſecret from me? why muſt not I be truſted with a ſecret?

Young BONCOUR.

And may I depend on my father's permiſſion to be happy.

BONCOUR.

Even as you pleaſe, Sir—O—aye—madam, and you too, I will prevent you the trouble of ſpeaking.

Young BONCOUR.

Come, dear girl, let us haſte to make our friends happy with the news.

(Exeunt Mrs. Boncour, young Boncour, Miſs, &c.

Sir GEORGE.

Ha! ha! ha!

BONCOUR.

You uſe me kindly, brother.

Sir GEORGE.

How would you have me uſe you, brother? you muſt excuſe me if I don't follow your example: you ſee an inſtance now, that by humouring theſe good people, I have gain'd their affections, I mean their thanks; affections, indeed, they have none, but for themſelves; but had I taken your part, and ſpoken my real ſentiments, I had pull'd an old houſe on my head; your wife would have abus'd me, your daughter have hated me, and your ſon have wiſh'd to ſend me out of the world.

BONCOUR.

But is this conſiſtent with your behaviour this afternoon, when I receiv'd your letter?

Sir GEORGE.

Remember, brother, we were alone then; and at the worſt I ſhould only have oppos'd my judgment to your's; here I muſt have encounter'd a majority—a meaſure ſeldom attended with ſucceſs; well, but for your comfort, I have contriv'd a ſcheme to diſappoint them all effectually.

BONCOUR.

Brother, I thank you; but will it be a good-natur'd thing to diſappoint them. poor things?

Sir GEORGE.

Good-nature! damn the word; I hate it:—— they ſay it is a word ſo peculiar to our language, that it can't be tranſlated into any other—Good-nature! *(Exeunt.*

End of the Second ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *Valence's Houſe.*

Enter VALENCE *and* YOUNG KENNEL.

VALENCE.

CONſider, young gentleman, the conſequence of diſobedience to a father; eſpecally to ſo paſſionate a father as Sir Gregory—

Young KENNEL.

Don't talk to me of fathers! Parblieu! it is fine topſy-turvy work, to travel firſt and go to ſchool afterwards.

VALENCE.

Upon my word it would do ſome of our young travellers no harm.

Young KENNEL

That I, who am to inherit a fortune of five thouſand pounds a year, may not marry whom I pleaſe, but muſt have cramm'd down my throat ſome bread pudding of a citizen's daughter, or ſcrag end of a woman of quality!

VALENCE.

You don't know whom Sir Gregory may provide for you.

Young KENNEL.

But I know whom he will not;—beſides, I ſhall provide for myſelf—

VA-

VALENCE.

Conſider firſt the ſin of diſobedience;—you know it is in his power to diſinherit you.

Young KENNEL,

No, indeed, don't I, nor he neither, that's better:—plague! if he could do that, I believe I ſhould be a little civiller to him—no, no, that's out of his power, I aſſure you; my tutor let me into that ſecret a great while ago.

Enter Miſs VALENCE.

VALENCE.

Oh, here comes my daughter according to my orders;—now if he had not unluckily ſeen this wench at the play—— (*Aſide.*

Miſs VALENCE.

Did you ſend for me, Sir?

VALENCE.

I ſend for you! no; but come hither.

Young KENNEL.

Ha! parblieu! 'tis ſhe—'tis the very ſame.

Miſs VALENCE.

What coxcomb is this? (*Aſide.*

Young KENNEL.

This is the moſt lucky adventure that hath happened in all my travels.

VALENCE.

You ſtare at my daughter as if you had ſeen her before.

Young KENNEL.

As certain as I have ſeen the king of France;—but, Sir, is this lady your daughter?

VALENCE.

She is, Sir; I have only one other child.

Young

Young KENNEL.

Then I believe, Sir, you are father to an angel; you know, Sir, I told you I ſaw a lady at the play, and for whom I would be diſobedient to all the fathers in the univerſe.

VALENCE.

I proteſt, Sir, you ſurpriſe me.—

Miſs VALENCE.

Sir, may I go?

VALENCE.

Aye, Aye, child;—go—go. (*Exit. Miſs Val.*

Young KENNEL.

Sir—madam, can you be ſo barbarous?

VALENCE.

Sir Gregory will be back in a minute I would not have him know any thing of this for the world, he would run me through the body, tho' I am innocent.

Young KENNEL.

Never fear him, I will defend you. Let me ſee her once more.

VALENCE.

You ſhall ſee her again; but have patience, if you will get your father away, and return back by yourſelf, you ſhall ſee her once to take your leave of her, for you muſt not diſobey your father; but are you certain he can't diſinherit you? that is, that he is only tenant for life?

Young KENNEL.

I don't know whether he is tenant for life or for death; but I know that my tutor, and ſeveral lawyers too, have told me he could not keep me out of one acre.

VALENCE.

But you are ſure you had it from good lawyers?

Young KEN-

Young KENNEL.

Aye, as any in the kingdom.

VALENCE.

Well, I am glad of it; 'tis a terrible thing for a man to diſinherit his children:—don't be undutiful unleſs you can't help it, and if you can't help it, why it is not your fault; but huſh, here's Sir Gregory.

Enter Sir GREGORY.

Sir GREGORY.

Well, have you brought him to it, will he be a good boy, and marry a woman of quality, or no?

VALENCE.

I have ſaid all that I can ſay, Sir Gregory, and upon my word he is rather too hard for me; I would have you conſider a little, Sir, it is only whether he ſhall chuſe a wife for himſelf or not:—conſider, Sir Gregory, he is to live with her, not you.

Young KENNEL.

Aye, I am to live with her, not you—

Sir GREGORY.

That's not true, Mr. Valence; I intend both he and ſhe ſhall live with me; they ſhall down to Dirty Park next week, and there they ſhall remain.

Young KENNEL.

I'll be curs'd tho' if we do.

VALENCE.

That very argument makes againſt you; for if he ſhould have fix'd on a private gentlewoman, and that you don't know but he hath, ſhe may go down to Dirty Park; but a woman of quality—why, Sir Gregory, ſhe'd fetch Dirty Park up hither, and convert a thouſand of your acres into half a rood in Groſvenor ſquare.

Young KEN-

Young KENNEL.

Aye, into half a rood in Groſvenor-ſquare.

Sir GREGORY.

Would ſhe? let me ſee her there once, I'll anſwer for her; why Mr. Valence, I'll tell you what I did myſelf. I married this boy's mother in this town, ſhe was a woman of faſhion, a well bred woman; tho' I had but a ſmall fortune with her, but twenty thouſand pounds—I married her for love; well, the next morning down trundled her and I to Dirty Park, and when I had her there, ecod, I kept her there; and whenever ſhe aſk'd to go to London, my anſwer was, that as I hated the town myſelf, ſhe had better ſtay till ſhe had a daughter old enough to be her companion.

VALENCE.

But ſhe was not a woman of quality, Sir Gregory.

Sir GREGORY.

No, not quite your tip-top of all, not one of your dutcheſſes, nor your counteſſes, but her father was a ſquire, and that's quality enough.

VALENCE.

Now you talk like a reaſonable man.

Young KENNEL.

Aye, faith, that's ſomething like a chriſtian.

Sir GREGORY.

Why, you rogue, do you make a heathen of me? why, did I ever talk otherwiſe?

VALENCE.

Nay, do not be captious, Sir Gregory.

Sir GREGORY.

Captious! ha! ha! ha! why, do you think I am angry with the boy for his wit? no, no, le him be as ſharp as he will, I always encourage his wit, that is the chief thing he learnt in his travels.

Enter

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Sir George Boncour, Sir—

Sir GREGORY.

But, come Mr. Valence, let's go and crack one bottle together.

VALENCE.

Shew him up. (*Exit Servant*) Excuſe me, Sir Gregory, I have buſineſs.

Sir GREGORY.

Well, come Greg, you ſhan't flinch—ah, Mr. Valence, I aſſure you the rogue is as true an Engliſhman at his glaſs as ever. (*Exit.*

Young KENNEL.

I ſhall give him the ſlip, and be back again as ſoon as I can.

Sir GREGORY (*within.*

Why Greg——Greg!—

Young KENNEL.

Coming! Pardie! he hollows at me as if I was a whipper-in. (*Exit.*

VALENCE.

This was beyond my hope, beyond my expectation; I deſpair not of Sir Gregory's conſent—but if not, as long as he can't cut off the entail—

Enter Sir GEORGE BONCOUR.

Sir GEORGE.

Your ſervant, Mr. Valence.

VALENCE.

Moſt noble Sir George, I have not had the honour of ſeeing you a great while. I ſuppoſe he is come to make up the match, but 'tis too late. (*Aſide.*

Sir GEORGE.

I am ſorry, Sir, for the occaſion of waiting on you now, and ſo will you too; I know you will: tho'

tho' perhaps, it will give you an opportunity of exerting your friendſhip; that may be ſome alleviation; in ſhort, my brother is undone.

VALENCE.

How!

Sir GEORGE.

Unleſs one can raiſe ten thouſand pounds within an hour, an execution will be in his houſe.

VALENCE.

An execution in his houſe for ten thouſand pounds! what! a man of his eſtate?

Sir GEORGE.

Eſtate! what eſtate could ſtand out againſt the prodigality of his children? beſides, between you and me, with all his prudence, he has been dabling in the funds, that bottomleſs pit, that ſwallows up any fortune. Eſtate!—ah, all mortgaged, all eat out; it matters not to tell it, for within theſe two days the whole town muſt know he is not worth a groat.

VALENCE.

I am very ſorry for it, upon my word; I am ſhock'd to the laſt degree, poor gentleman! my neighbour, my acquaintance, my friend!

Sir GEORGE.

Do not let it move you too much.

VALENCE.

Why do you ask impoſſibilities? do you think me more than man, or that my heart is ſtone? is flint? oh, my good Sir George, you know not how tenderly I feel the misfortunes of others—of my friends eſpecially, and of him my beſt of friends; I am too tender hearted for a man.

Sir GEORGE.

I know your goodneſs, your exceſſive goodneſs, and therefore contrary to the expreſs charge, that of all men, you ſhould know nothing of the matter.

VALENCE.

I am obliged to him—I know the reaſon of that, but I find you don't. (*Aſide.*

Sir GEORGE.

I ſay contrary to his expreſs injunction; I acquaint you with his misfortunes; ſince I know you are both able and willing to ſave him from diſgrace; a mere trifle will do it, tho' nothing but money will do.

VALENCE.

Money! why does not he ſell? why does he not mortgage? there is an eſtate of his contiguous to mine, I have a value for it, as it is his; and rather than it ſhall go to a ſtranger, I will borrow the money to purchaſe it—men in diſtreſs always ſell pennyworths. (*Aſide.*

Sir GEORGE.

Damn'd raſcal! (*Aſide.*) well, I'll tell him what you ſay.

VALENCE.

Pray do.—Your humble ſervant, and pray if that eſtate be ſold let me have the refuſal of it. (*Exit Sir Geo.*) Mercy on me! where can one find an honeſt man? that ever he ſhould lay ſuch a plot of intermarriage between our families, when he knew himſelf undone! how vary ought a man to be in each moment of his life, when every fool is a politician, and capable of laying ſchemes to attack him.

Enter

Enter Young VALENCE.

O, Sir, I have news which I am ſure will pleaſe you! Mr. Boncour hath conſented to your terms, ſo there is now no impediment to the union of our families.

VALENCE.

Indeed, there is an impediment which will be never got over; in ſhort, I have news for you, which I am afraid will not pleaſe you. Mr. Boncour is undone.

Young VALENCE.

Undone, Sir!

VALENCE.

Not worth a groat.

Young VALENCE.

How! is it poſſible?

VALENCE.

Indeed, Sir, I don't know by what means men ruin themſelves; we ſee mens fortunes ruin'd, and others made every day, no one knows how; it is ſufficient, I am certain that it is ſo; and I expect you will have no more thought of his daughter.

Young VALENCE.

Truly, Sir, I am not very ambitious of marrying a beggar.

VALENCE.

You have none of my blood in you if you are; and, take my word for it, there are in marriage many comfortable hours when a man wants not the aſſiſtance of beggary to make him hang himſelf.

Young VALENCE.

Sir, it was in obedience to your commands, that I thought of the match at all.

VALENCE.

And it is, Sir, in obedience to my commands, that I expect you to break it off.

Young VALENCE.

I hope you'll give me leave to do it with civility.

VALENCE.

O! with as much civility as you pleaſe, Sir, when you are oblig'd by prudence to do what the world call an ill thing, always do it with civility.

Young VALENCE.

Sir, I ſhall obey you in all things.

VALENCE.

Send your ſiſter to me in my cloſet, I muſt give her a leſſon of the ſame kind.

Young VALENCE.

She will, I am confident, receive it with the ſame regard. (*Exit Young Valence.*

VALENCE.

I have no reaſon to doubt it; thanks to my ſeverity, for by continually thwarting my children's deſires, I made their inclinations ſo uſeleſs to them, that at length they ſeem'd to have none at all, but to be entirely guided by my will. Severity is, in ſhort, the whole duty of a parent. (*Exit,*

SCENE II. BONCOUR'S *Houſe,*

Enter Young BONCOUR, *and* Miſs BONCOUR.

Miſs BONCOUR.

La, brother, you are always teizing me with your odious queſtions: what condition is my heart in? what condition is your own in? we ſeem to be pretty much in the ſame circumſtances.

Young

Young BONCOUR.

I confeſs, and glory in it. I wonder why the devil women ſhould have more reſerve than men.

Miſs BONCOUR.

O, don't be angry with us on that account; we have not a bit more than is uſeful to us; and really it ſeems well enough contriv'd to keep your whimſical affections alive, which ſeldom purſue us longer than you have difficulties thrown in your way.

Young BONCOUR.

As you have had no experience, ſiſter, you muſt have heard this from others; and, believe me, child, they told thee thoſe frightful ſtories, and made bugbears of men merely to deter thee from marrying, that's all: they only frighten thee, as they do children, with apparitions.

Miſs BONCOUR.

It is prepoſterous tho' to frighten us, in order to make us deſire to lie alone.

Young BONCOUR.

Well, you don't know but I am an exception to your firſt rule, if it be general. (*Miſs Boncour ſighs*) why that ſigh?

Miſs BONCOUR.

I wiſh there may be another.

Young BONCOUR.

I am convinc'd you will find another in my friend Valence.

Miſs BONCOUR.

It is my intereſt to hope ſo, ſince you have contriv'd among you to marry me to him.

Young

Young BONCOUR.

All compliande! you have no affection for him, then?

Miſs BONCOUR.

Shall I tell you the truth, brother?

Young BONCOUR.

I would not put you to too violent pain, ſiſter, but if without great danger of your life, it might come out—

Miſs BONCOUR.

Why, then I do love him, and ſhall love him to all eternity.

Enter Servant.

SERVANT.

Madam, Mr. Valence to wait on you.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Shew him into the parlour, I'll come to him. (*Exit Servant.*) Brother, you will keep my ſecret; at leaſt, don't tell him 'till a day or two after I am married, and perhaps I may be before hand with you.

(*Exit Miſs Boncour.*

Young BONCOUR.

Get you gone for a good natur'd girl: he is a raſcal who would not make you happy, and be ſo himſelf with you.

(*Re-enter Servant with a Letter.*)

SERVANT.

Mr. Valence's man, Sir, delivered me this.

(*Exit Servant.*

Young BONCOUR.

Ha! I know the dear hand.—(*Reads.*) Sir, I am ſorry to inform you, that I have this moment orders

orders from my father to——Ha! confuſion!——to ſee you no more: you will beſt know on this occaſion how to act, for the ſake of your unhappy Sophia Valence! my blood runs cold; I'll fly to her and know the reaſon of this change of my fortune—poor girl, ſhe wants a comforter as much as myſelf.

(Exit.

SCENE III.

Another Apartment in BONCOUR'S *Houſe.*

Enter Young VALENCE *and Miſs* BONCOUR.

Young VALENCE.

How ſudden are the changes in this world, how vain our purſuits! an hour ago I was the happieſt of mankind, and am now the moſt miſerable.

Miſs BONCOUR.

This is nothing but ſome ſcruple ſtarted between the old gentleman, which will be ſettled again: this be aſſur'd of, while your happineſs is in my power, you ſhall never be miſerable.

Young VALENCE.

Yet conſider, madam, conſider my condition; I, who, if I was poſſeſt of all my father's fortune, ſhould be an unworthy offering to your beauty: with what aſſurance can I throw a diſinherited ſon at your feet?

Miſs BONCOUR.

Fathers often threaten what they never perform: but let your's be ever ſo obſtinate, I know my father's good nature to be ſuch, that he will ſettle a fortune on us that will enable us to live at our eaſe, if not in ſplendour.

Young VALENCE.

O! my deareſt love, I fear there are no hopes from that quarter; for the reaſon of my father's

breaking

breaking off the match, was an account he juſt receiv'd from undoubted authority, that your father is irretrievably ruin'd, and is not now worth a ſhilling in the world.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Good heavens! what do I hear?

Young VALENCE.

'Tis but too true; and 'tis with the utmoſt reluctance I come the fatal meſſenger of ſuch unwelcome tidings! oh that I were now but maſter of the fortune I am entitled to, that I might prove the ſincerity of my paſſion; that I might ſhew my ſole object was the poſſeſſion of your lovely ſelf, without any ſordid views of fortune.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Then all the flattering proſpect of happineſs I had before me is vaniſh'd in an inſtant.

Young VALENCE.

Why ſo, my angel, if the change of fortune makes no change in our love, we may ſtill be happy.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Happy! what by indulging a hopeleſs paſſion!

Young VALENCE.

Why hopeleſs? it is in our power inſtantly to realize its joys—curſe on all thoſe who conſpir'd to fetter love with any chains to make it ſubſervient to the gain of lawyers and prieſts; cannot we truſt to the ties of nature and our own affections? is not this dear hand ſecurity enough for your heart, without a more formal union? O, melting ſoftneſs. Ha! by my hopes ſhe diſſolves—I'll carry her now (*Aſide.*) O my paradiſe, this hour, this minute, this inſtant.—

Miſs

Miſs BONCOUR.

What do you mean?

Young VALENCE.

Need I tell you my meaning? or can words do it? O, no; my ſoul, my angel.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Sure I am in a dream! pray who are you, Sir?

Young VALENCE.

You are in a dream, indeed; do not you know your Valence?

Miſs BONCOUR.

My Valence! no, he never would uſe me thus.

Young VALENCE.

Does the exceſs of my paſſion offend you, which, inflamed by diſappointment, will admit of no delay? I here plight my ſolemn vow, and call heaven to witneſs that you are my wife, and at my father's death—

Miſs BONCOUR.

Be gone, villain, and never ſee me more. (*Exit.*

Young VALENCE.

This I might expect on the firſt propoſal; but her diſtreſs and my perſeverance muſt in time prevail. (*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

Another Apartment in Boncour's Houſe.

Enter BONCOUR *and* Sir GEORGE.

Sir GEORGE.

Your ruin will go round the town before night; by ſix all the good women will order their horſes

to blame your conduct, and pity your family in every aſſembly and private company they meet with.

BONCOUR.

So, you think I ſhall have no more difficulty to prevent the match.

Sir GEORGE.

I do, indeed, and hope you will reap more advantage than that from it.

BONCOUR.

What, pray?

Sir GEORGE.

Be cur'd of your diſtemper—your good nature! have you not oblig'd almoſt every one of your acquaintance? Have you not lent money without ſecurity? Have you not always been inclin'd to ſpeak well of mankind, and blam'd nothing but the moſt notorious villainy? Have not your doors been open as thoſe of an hoſpital, to the ſuſtenance of the poor? nay, have you not taken them from a priſon, and brought them to your table? Are there not many rich men who owe the original of their wealth to your bounty? and yet, if after all that you have done, ſhould you not be able to borrow five pounds in the town, would it not cure you?

BONCOUR.

Why ſhould I be ſorry that I have been good, becauſe others are evil! if I have acted right, I have done well! tho' alone; if wrong, the ſanction of all mankind would not juſtify my conduct.

Sir GEORGE.

I tell you, Sir, you have not acted right: you have acted very wrong in doing kindneſs to a parcel

cel of rogues and raſcals, who with the tenth part of your underſtanding have call'd you fool for ſerving them; have privately laugh'd at you in your proſperity, and will publickly deſpiſe you in your adverſity—a good natur'd man! O! 'tis a precious character.

BONCOUR.

Ha! ha! ha! brother, you yourſelf are a good natur'd man, and don't know it.

Sir GEORGE.

Why, truly, I have been guilty of ſome infirmities of that kind, for which I am heartily ſorry, I have told a man he deſerved to be hanged, when he ought to have been broke on the wheel; and ſometimes I pay my tradeſmens bills in half a year without deduction, when the raſcals would gain three per cent. if I paid them in a twelvemonth: I have refus'd going to law with a man for a debt, only becauſe I knew he could not pay the charges: I have ſhaken a rogue by the hand, only becauſe it was the faſhion; and have expreſſed abundance of ſorrow for the misfortunes of my acquaintance, when they have not given me the leaſt uneaſineſs, yes, I think, in the main, I am too good-natur'd, truly.

BONCOUR.

Well, Sir George, let the effects this ſcheme of your's produces upon my children, be the teſt of our principles.

Sir GEORGE.

Content.

Enter Young BONCOUR.

Young BONCOUR.

My father! oh, Sir, I have heard ſuch news! heaven forbid there ſhould be the leaſt ſhadow or colour of truth in it.

Sir GEORGE.

Why, ſure, Sir, it can't ſurprize you to hear your father is ruin'd, when you have been endeavouring by a long courſe of extravagance to bring it about!

Young BONCOUR.

Sir, I can ill bear jeſting on this ſubjeſt: if the indulgence of my father has allowed the inadvertency of my youth to bring this misfortune on him, the agonies of all my future days will not ſufficiently puniſh me for it.

BONCOUR.

Do you hear that, brother?

Sir GEORGE.

I would not have you take it ſo much to heart neither, ſince your own ruin will not be abſolutely included in your father's; you have a certain reverſion of the eſtate, by the marriage ſettlement, upon which you may ſtill raiſe money for your own ſubſiſtence; and I do not ſuppoſe you mad enough to give up your right to that, in order to enable your father to preſerve himſelf, by cutting off the entail.

Young BONCOUR.

How! is it in my power to preſerve him?

Sir GEORGE.

Yes, in that way you may; but in no other.

Young BONCOUR.

Send for a lawyer this moment: let him point out the method: if there were no other way my blood ſhould ſign the deed. O, my father, believe me, I am bleſt to give you this trifling inſtance of my duty, of my affection!

BONCOUR.

My child! O, brother, I can ſcarce ſupport it.

Young

Young BONCOUR.

I'll this inſtant to my lawyer; I am impatient till it be done; juſtice, gratitude, duty, to the beſt of fathers, will not let me reſt till it is accompliſh'd. (*Exit.*

BONCOUR.

Well, Sir George, what think you now?

Sir GEORGE.

Think! why I think he has ſmelt out the trick, and has artfully contriv'd this cheap method of appearing meritorious in your eyes.

BONCOUR.

Oh, brother, that is too ſevere a cenſure; the feeling that he ſhewed, the warmth, the earneſtneſs with which he expreſſed himſelf, could never be aſſumed by one not accuſtomed to diſſemble.

Sir GEORGE.

Well, if that be the caſe, all I can ſay is, that you have damn'd good luck in having a ſon whoſe natural diſpoſition was ſo good, that all the pains you have taken, have not been able to ſpoil him entirely; but who have we here?

Enter Sir GREGORY.

Sir GREGORY *entering.*

Pſhaw! at home, indeed! plague on thee, doſt think I want to aſk whether a man's at home when I ſee him at the window? neighbour Boncour, how fares it?—what, Sir George!

BONCOUR.

Is it poſſible! Sir Gregory Kennel in town.

Sir GREGORY.

That queſtion hath been aſk'd by every one I have ſeen ſince I have been here: why ſhould it not be as poſſible for us country gentlemen to come

to

to town; as for you town gentlemen to come into the country, I don't know whether you are glad to ſee us here, but we ſhould be glad to ſee ſome of you there a little oft'ner.

BONCOUR.

I hope you left all well there, Sir Gregory?

Sir GREGORY.

Yes; I left the tenants very well; and they give their humble ſervice to you, and would be very glad of your company to ſpend a little of your money amongſt them.

BONCOUR.

But how does your family, Sir Gregory? how does my godſon do?

Sir GREGORY.

Why, the 'ſquire is very well; I was bringing him to ſee you; but I taught un to travel, I think, and ſo, ecod, at the corner of one of the ſtreets, he travell'd off, and left me in the lurch: you have no need to be aſham'd of your godſon, I can tell you; he is a fine gentleman: I ſuppoſe you have heard that he has made the tour of Europe, as he calls it.

BONCOUR.

Not I, truly.

Sir GREGORY.

But, pray, Sir George, what do you think is my buſineſs in town?

Sir GEORGE.

Faith, I can't tell——To ſell oxen, I ſuppoſe.

Sir GREGORY.

No; not that entirely; though I have ſome cattle with me too——Pray gueſs again.

Sir GEORGE.

To ſee my Lord Mayor's ſhow, perhaps.

Sir

Sir GREGORY.

No, no; I don't love ſhows. Well then, ſince you can't tell, I'll tell you; to get a good wife for my ſon; for though the boy hath ſeen all Europe, till a man hath married his ſon, he han't diſcharged his duty—then he hath done all in his power.

Sir GEORGE.

Aye, aye, his wife will do the reſt.

Enter Miſs BONCOUR.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Sir, when you are at leiſure, I ſhall be happy to ſpeak with you.

BONCOUR.

Preſently, my dear—Sir Gregory Kennel—a very old friend of mine—my daughter, Sir Gregory.

Sir GREGORY.

A brave, laſs, faith! by your leave, madam, why that's well; you are in the right not to be ſhy to me, for I have had you in my arms before now.

BONCOUR.

And her brother too, Sir Gregory.

Sir GREGORY.

Aye, ſo I have, and truly for the matter we were talking of, ſince I ſee what I ſee, I don't care for going any farther; what ſay you, neighbour Boncour, you know my eſtate, and I know your's, you have ſeen my ſon, and I ſee your daughter; what ſay you to a match between them.

BONCOUR.

My daughter, Sir Gregory, will be the propereſt perſon to ask.

Sir

Sir GREGORY.

Not at all; what ſignifies asking a perſon a queſtion, when you know before-hand what will be the anſwer? eſpecially when you know that anſwer to be a falſe one——no, no, the boy ſhall ask her, and then they will lie to one another; for if ſhe ſwears ſhe does not love him, he'll ſwear he'll love her for ever, and that is as good a one.

BONCOUR.

Sir Gregory, I am ſenſible of the honour you propoſe me, but ſhall neither force nor oppoſe her inclination.

Miſs BONCOUR.

I find he hath not heard our ſtory (*Aſide.*

Sir GREGORY.

Well, my little Gilliflower, ſince I am to ask thee, what would it ſay to a hearty, healthy, good-humour'd young dog, that would love thee till thy heart ached.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Sir; I don't underſtand you.

Sir GREGORY.

O lud, there is a——

Miſs BONCOUR.

Hold, Sir, no rudeneſs; when I am properly aſk'd, I ſhall know how to anſwer. (*Exit.*

Sir GREGORY.

That is, when ſhe is aſk'd by the young fellow, that I ſuppoſe is proper aſk'd.

Sir GEORGE.

'Tis an alliance on no account to be loſt——well, Sir Gregory, I hope my niece gave you a ſatisfactory anſwer.

Sir

Sir GREGORY.

The ſame anſwer that a lawyer or phyſician could give who were attack'd without a fee.

Sir GEORGE.

What's that?

Sir GREGORY.

That they were not properly aſk'd; but here will be the proper perſon himſelf preſently; he who knows where to find me.

BONCOUR.

In the mean time, Sir Gregory, what ſay you to a bottle of Burgundy?

Sir GREGORY.

I ſhall like a bottle of any thing very well, for I have not drank a ſingle drop this whole hour.

BONCOUR.

I am ready to wäit on you.

Sir GREGORY.

Wait on me! prithee get out and ſhew me the way; a plague of ceremony. (*Exeunt.*

End of the Fourth ACT.

ACT V. *Scene* I.

A Room in VALENCE'S *Houſe.*

Enter Young BONCOUR *and* Miſs VALENCE.

Miſs VALENCE.

AND ſo you have promiſed to reſign your right of inheritance in the eſtate to your father?

Young BONCOUR.

I have, madam.

Miſs VALENCE.

Then you have done like a fool; and deſerve to be pointed at as ſuch.

Young BONCOUR.

How, madam! would you have me inſenſibly and quietly ſit down, and ſee my father ruin'd?

Miſs VALENCE.

Aye, fifty fathers, rather than part with my proſpect of a fortune.

Young BONCOUR.

Does this agree with thoſe profeſſions of filial duty I have heard from Miſs Valence?

Miſs VALENCE.

Profeſs'd! ha! ha! ha! to my father! when I never dar'd to do otherwiſe. I may rather ſay, this fooliſh generoſity, is little of a piece with your frequent profeſſions of diſobedience.

Young BONCOUR.

Well, no more of this, dear Sophia. Tell me when you will make me happy? Miſs

Miſs VALENCE.

I don't know what you mean—

Young BONCOUR.

How!

Miſs VALENCE.

Sure, you can't imagine, when you parted with the right of your eſtate, but that you parted with your right to your miſtreſs. Do you think I would do ſo imprudent a thing as marry a beggar?

Young BONCOUR.

Did you not tell me to day, nay, ſcarce an hour ago, that neither the misfortunes of my father, nor the commands of your own, ſhould prevent our happineſs?

Miſs VALENCE.

Nor do they. 'Tis your own folly you are to thank; a folly, which had you lov'd me, you could not have been guilty of ——— Beſides, I did not know then, that I had a lover at my command. [*Aſide.*

Young BONCOUR.

Sure my eyes or my ears deceive me! theſe words cannot come from the generous Miſs Valence.——

Miſs VALENCE.

Indeed I am as generous, as a prudent woman ought to be, or ever will be; I hope you do not expect me to have the romantic ideas of a girl of fifteen, to dream of woods and deſarts; you would not have me live in a cottage on love.

Young BONCOUR.

I find I have been in an error, the groſſeſt, wildeſt, and moſt monſtrous of errors; I have thought a woman faithful, juſt and generous.—

Miſs VALENCE.

Why, truly, that is a miſtake, ſomething extraordinary in ſo great a man; but if you have any thing of importance, I beg you would communicate it, for my mantua-maker waits for me in the next room, and I expect a lady every moment, to carry me into the city, where I am to give her my judgment on a fan mount. So, Mr.

Boncour, you will excuſe me at preſent, and do me the favour to give my compliments to your ſiſter.

[*Exit. Miſs Valence.*

YOUNG BONCOUR. [*Stands ſome time ſilent.*]

Young BONCOUR.

I have been deceiv'd with a vengeance! Thou art indeed another creature, than the object of my affection was: where is ſhe then? why no where. This is the real creature, and the object of my love was the phantom. Vaniſh then, my love, with that, for how can a building ſtand, when the foundation is gone?

(*Exit Young Boncour.*

SCENE II.

Enter Young VALENCE *and* Miſs VALENCE, (*laughing.*

Miſs VALENCE.

I aſſure you, brother, I take it ill of you to overhear my privacies.

Young VALENCE.

Nay, never be aſham'd of your merit. I ſhall eſteem you always for your reſolution, I own, I ſcarce believ'd any woman could ſo eaſily have reſign'd her lover.

Miſs VALENCE.

O, 'tis a terrible thing for a woman to reſign her lover, when ſhe is under fifteen, or above fifty; that is, for a girl to part with what ſhe calls her firſt love, or an old woman with what ſhe fears will be her laſt. But at one and twenty, when one has ſeen a little of the world, the changing of one lover for another, is as eaſy as changing one's cloaths.

Young VALENCE.

Well, ſince you are ſo frank with me, I'll be as communicative with you. My paſſion for Miſs Boncour is a little more ungovernable, than your's for her brother, and ſince it is inconvenient to have her for a wife, I have determined to have her for a miſtreſs.

Miſs VALENCE

And do you think you ſhall be able to accompliſh your point?

Young BONCOUR.

Yes, and you will think ſo too, I believe, when you know

know all —— In ſhort, I attack'd her this very morning, depreciated marriage with violence, and preſs'd her with all the eagerneſs of a man, whoſe appetites were too impatient to endure the tedious ceremony of ſaying grace before he ſatisfies them.

Miſs VALENCE.

And how did ſhe receive you?

Young VALENCE.

Much better than I expected. However, at laſt ſhe rallied her ſpirits, and with ſome paſſion commanded me to leave her; I was ſcarce at home before I received this letter.

Miſs VALENCE.

Any letter after ſuch a propoſal was an acceptance of it. (*Reads.*)

"As you cannot wonder at my being a little ſurprized at what paſt this morning between us, you will eaſily be able to account for my behaviour on that occaſion. If you deſire me to ſay I am ſorry for ſo peremptorily putting an end to your viſit, you may think I have ſaid ſo. However, I deſire to ſee you this evening punctually at eight, and that you would, if poſſible, avoid being ſeen by any of the family, but your's."

Young VALENCE.

What are you conſidering about?

Miſs VALENCE.

Only whether it is her hand.

Young VALENCE.

That I am ſure it is.

Miſs VALENCE.

Then I am ſure you have nothing to do, but to keep your appointment.

Enter VALENCE *and* Young KENNEL.

VALENCE.

Since you are ſo very deſirous, Sir, to ſee my daughter, I don't ſee how I can refuſe the ſon of my good friend Sir Gregory;

Gregory; refuſing indeed is not my talent—I own I cannot gueſs what earneſt buſineſs you can have with her.

Young KENNEL.

Upon my honour, Sir, it is not of any diſſervice to the young lady, nay, I believe I may truſt you with it.

VALENCE.

No, no, no, I will be truſted with nothing.—I ſee nothing, I hear nothing, I know nothing. But pray, young gentleman, are you ſure now (I only aſk for an impertinent curioſity) are you ſure that Sir Gregory can't cut off the entail of his eſtate?

Young KENNEL.

Why, if you won't believe, you may aſk the lawyers that my tutor conſulted about it.

VALENCE.

Nay, nay, it is nothing to me, it is no buſineſs of mine—— O, here is my daughter. Child, Mr. Kennel, eldeſt ſon of Sir Gregory Kennel, deſires me to introduce him to your acquaintance——— *(They ſalute.* ——— Well, Mr. Kennel, you muſt pardon me, I muſt leave you on buſineſs of conſequence: Son, you muſt come along with me, I aſk pardon for only leaving my daughter to keep you company.

Young VALENCE.

Sir, I wait on you. [*Exit Valence and Young Valence.*

Young KENNEL.

Pray, madam, was you ever at Paris?

Miſs VALENCE.

No, Sir, I have never been out of my own country.

Young KENNEL.

That is a great misfortune to you, madam; for I would not give a fig for any thing that had not made the tour of Europe.

Miſs VALENCE.

I thought, Sir, travelling had been a neceſſary qualification only to you gentlemen. I need not aſk, Sir, if you have been at Paris.

Young

Young KENNEL.

No, I hope not, madam; I hope no one will imagine theſe cloaths to be the handy work of any Engliſh taylor: Paris indeed! why, madam, I have made the tour of Europe.

Miſs VALENCE.

Upon my word, this is extraordinary in one ſo young; I ſuppoſe, Sir, you went abroad very ſoon after you left ſchool.

Young KENNEL.

School! ha! ha! ha! why, madam, I was never at ſchool at all; I liv'd with the old witch my grandmother, till I was ſeventeen, and then my father ſtole me away from her, and ſent me abroad, where I wiſh I had ſtaid for ever———for, ah! madam!

Miſs VALENCE.

Now he begins (he is juſt what I would chuſe for a huſband)——— *(Aſide.*

Young KENNEL.

Can you not read in my eyes that I have loſt my heart?

Miſs VALENCE.

Avez vous donc laiſſez vôtre Cœur a Paris, monſieur?

Young KENNEL.

What the devil is that, madam?

Miſs VALENCE.

Don't you underſtand French, Sir?

Young KENNEL.

Not a ſyllable, upon my ſoul, except an oath or two.

Miſs VALENCE.

I ſuppoſe I ſay, Sir, you have left your heart at Paris.

Young KENNEL.

No, madam, you cannot ſuppoſe that: you ſaw, you muſt have ſeen at the play in what corner of the world my heart was.

Miſs VALENCE.

I have no time to play the coquette. [*Aſide.* Heigh-ho! *(Sighs.)*

Young

Young KENNEL.

Ha! ſure that ſigh betokens pity.

Miſs VALENCE.

How do you know you want it? Have you declared your paſſion?

Young KENNEL.

Not, unleſs my eyes have done it.

Miſs VALENCE.

Perhaps ſhe who hath your heart, may have returned you her own.

Young KENNEL.

That would make me happier than the King of France, the Doge of Venice, or any prince I have ever ſeen; but if ſhe hath, ſure you muſt know it, and it is in your power———

Miſs VALENCE.

I, Sir!——O bleſs me!——My power!———What have you ſaid?

Young KENNEL.

O, take pity of the moſt unhappy man that ever was at Verſailles.

Miſs VALENCE.

I am ſo frighten'd, ſo confounded——Could I have imagin'd that I had made this impreſſion on your heart.

Young KENNEL.

No, madam, no, no, not you, the other lady that was with you:

Miſs VALENCE.

How, Sir!

Young KENNEL.

I am only ſoliciting you, to let me know where I may find that dear, adorable, divine creature, who was with you at the play the night before laſt; I loſt you both in the croud by a curſed accident, and by the moſt fortunate one have met with you once again to direct me to my love.

Miſs

Miſs VALENCE.

Unheard of impudence!——and am I to be a go-between?

Young KENNEL.

Can you refuſe me?

Miſs VALENCE.

Refuſe you! Go, oaf! Go find your ſlut, your trollop, your beggar, for ſo ſhe is.

Young KENNEL.

Were ſhe the meaneſt beggar upon earth, could I find her, I ſhould be happy.

Miſs VALENCE.

I could tear my fan—My hair—My fleſh——I'll to my cloſet, and vent myſelf in private. [*Exit Miſs Valence.*

Young KENNEL.

Hey-day! what can have put the woman in ſuch a paſſion?—But tho' ſhe won't tell me, now I have found her out, I ſhall ſurely find out her acquaintance; I will watch her cloſely, for I will diſcover my angel, tho' I make the tour of the whole world after her. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. BONCOUR'S *Apartment.*

Enter BONCOUR *and* Mrs. BONCOUR.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

But why kept a ſecret from me, why am I not worthy to know ſecrets?

BONCOUR.

I have given you what ſhould be a ſatisfactory reaſon.——I had promiſed not to tell it you.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

No, to be ſure! A wife is not a proper perſon to be truſted with any thing.

BONCOUR.

You have no reaſon to arraign my want of confidence in you.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Well then, do tell me the reaſon why you keep this a ſecret from me?

BONCOUR.

That would be to have no confidence in myſelf: come, my dear, leave this vain ſolicitation; you know I ſeldom reſolve to contradict you in any thing: but when I do, I have never been wheedled, or cry'd, or bullied out of my reſolution.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

What can I think of this?

BONCOUR.

Why you are to think that you owe my condeſcenſion, to my tenderneſs, and not my folly.—Pray, my dear, lay aſide this caprice of temper, which may work your own miſery, but ſhall not mine; my gratitude to you will prevent my contributing to your uneaſineſs, but ſhall never make the quiet of my own life dependant on any other.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

It is a pretty compliment, truly, to aſſure me that your happineſs does not depend on me.

BONCOUR.

I ſcorn to compliment you, nor did I ever ſpeak to you but from my heart. I challenge you in any one inſtance of my whole courſe of behaviour, to blame my conduct, unleſs you join the world and condemn me for too much eaſineſs of diſpoſition; but I muſt leave you a little while.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

But I deſire you will not leave me.

BONCOUR.

I am oblig'd, I am guilty of rudeneſs every momer I ſtay. I aſſure you it is regard to decency only, and no to pleaſure, calls me from you.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

Why will you go then? Boncou

BONCOUR.

Becauſe I will always do what I think right, without regard to my own pleaſure, or that of others.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

You ſhall ſtay.

BONCOUR.

I will not.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

I will come and diſturb your company.

BONCOUR.

You would make me miſerable if you did, by forcing me to the laſt of evils.

Mrs. BONCOUR.

What is that, pray?

BONCOUR.

That of uſing violence to you. (*Exit Boncour.*

Mrs. BONCOUR.

What does the man mean? he never utter'd any thing like this before! I muſt turn over a new leaf, and exert more ſpirit than I have lately done. I will go this inſtant and break up his company—but ſuppoſe he ſhould uſe violence; he ſeemed very reſolute. Ha! I will not provoke him ſo far—but the ſecret I will hear—or—he ſhall never ſleep again, that I am reſolv'd. (*Exit.*

SCENE. IV.

Another Room in Boncour's Houſe.

Sir George, Sir Gregory, and Mr. Boncour diſcovered drinking.

Sir GEORGE.

Sir Gregory, it is your glaſs.

Sir GREGORY.

Well, and it ſhall be my glaſs then—here's ſucceſs to the war; and I hope we ſhall ſhortly have French pointers in England as plenty as curs.

Sir GEORGE.

Well ſaid, Sir Gregory, ſpoke like a true Engliſhman.

Sir GREGORY.

Aye, like an Engliſhman that will drink as long as he can ſtand, for the good of his country—odſo, here comes my ſon.

Enter YOUNG KENNEL.

BONCOUR.

Sir George, this is young Mr. Kennel. [*They ſalute.*

Sir GEORGE.

Is this your ſon, Sir Gregory?

Sir GREGORY.

Aye, I think ſo.

Sir GEORGE.

A hopeful youth, truly. [*Aſide.*

Sir GREGORY.

So, raſcal, how have you the aſſurance to look me in the face? how have you the impudence to come into my preſence, ſirrah, after running away from me.

Young KENNEL.

Nay, if you come to that, you run away from me.

Sir GREGORY.

That's a lie, and would be a pretty ſtory if it was true, to be outwalked by your father.

Young KENNEL.

Hold there, not ſo faſt, Sir, I don't allow you can outwalk me neither.

Sir GREGORY.

Don't you? why then I will ſee whether I can out drink you, I believe I can do that yet; Mr. Boncour, let us have a quart glaſs, for the raſcal ſhall ſtart fair, we won't give him a bottle ſcope,

Young KENNEL.

A quart glaſs! why, Sir, you don't intend to make me drunk?

Sir

Sir GREGORY.

Yes I do, Sir, but I hope a quart won't do it; you are not ſuch a milk-ſop as that. Harkee, ſirrah, it is all over, I have done your buſineſs for you; this gentleman and I have agreed that he ſhall be your father-in-law, ſo nothing remains but for you to ſee the wench, marry, and to bed, and then down to Dirty Park.

Young KENNEL.

Two words to that bargain, Sir, for I am engaged.

BONCOUR.

Nay, Sir Gregory, then——

Enter Young Boncour, and takes his father aſide.

Young BONCOUR.

Sir, I have ſomething to ſay to you in private from my ſiſter.

Sir GREGORY.

You are engaged?

Young KENNEL.

Even ſo, Sir.

Sir GREGORY.

Why then, Sir, my eſtate is engag'd too; I will diſinherit you, ſirrah: I won't leave you money enough to pay the taylor for ſuch another fool's cover as you have on now.

Young KENNEL.

Ha, ha, ha!

Sir GREGORY.

Do you laugh at me, you dog?

Young KENNEL.

Only at your diſinheriting me; my tutor has let me into that ſecret.

Sir GREGORY.

O, ho, he has, I will thank him for that the firſt time I ſee him: and in the mean time, ſirrah, do as I would have you, or— (*Lifts up his ſtick.*

Sir GEORGE.

Why, Sir Gregory, do you think this is the way to prevail with your ſon? it may be a knock down argument,

ment, I grant you, but I am much miſtaken if it will ever prove a convincing one.

Young KENNEL.

If he could diſinherit me, as I know he can't, I will never marry unleſs it be the woman I love. Nay, don't ſhake your ſtick about, I know a little of quarter-ſtaff as well as you.

Sir GREGORY.

Sirrah—I'll—I'll—

Sir GEORGE.

It is almoſt a pity to hinder theſe two loggerheads from falling foul of one another.

BONCOUR.

Gentlemen, I muſt beg to be excuſed one moment, I will return to you inſtantly—Sir George, I wiſh you would bring the company after us, I have a particular reaſon for it. (*Exit Boncour and Young Boncour.*

Sir GEORGE.

To Sir Gregory] Come, Sir Gregory, be pacified, you had beſt try by gentler methods to bring the young gentleman to reaſon.

Sir GREGORY.

I'll bring him by a good cudgel, that's my reaſon, oddſbodkins, I have ſent him a travelling to a fine purpoſe, truly, to learn to deſpiſe his father!

Young KENNEL.

You have hit it at laſt, my good old gentleman.

Sir GEORGE.

Come, Sir Gregory, we will if you pleaſe, adjourn for a few minutes; you have not ſeen the houſe—here are ſome pictures worth your ſeeing.

Sir GREGORY.

Why, I like to ſee pictures well enough, if they are handſome ones.

Young KENNEL.

They may do well enough for you, but I am convinced they muſt be ſad traſh to a man that has ſeen Italy. (*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE V.

Another Apartment.

Young VALENCE and Miſs BONCOUR.

Young VALENCE.

I will out wit my father, I will plunder him of every thing he has, to keep you in affluence equal to your deſire.

Miſs BONCOUR.

And do you intend literally to make me your miſtreſs?

Young VALENCE.

I intend to make you happy, and myſelf with you, be aſſured, if love, if wealth, can make you happy, thou ſhalt be ſo.

Miſs BONCOUR.

No, there is ſomething in that word miſtreſs, which I don't like.

Young VALENCE.

A groundleſs prejudice—cannot we join ourſelves, without the leave or aſſiſtance of a prieſt? are we more capable of transferring raptures to each other's boſoms by a few cant words which he pronounces? Where is the difference then of our being one another's, with marriage or without it?

Miſs BONCOUR.

Yes, as to me, it differs a little.

Young VALENCE.

How, my deareſt creature?

Miſs BONCOUR.

I ſhall be infamous this way, that's all.

Young VALENCE.

A falſe opinion of the world, unworthy your regard, our happineſs is precarious, indeed, if it is to be blown up and down by the inconſtant changeable breath of mankind.

Miſs

Miſs BONCOUR.

It ſeems ſtrange to me, however, that a man would make the creature he loves infamous. Could I ever have thought I ſhould have brought infamy on myſelf by that tender paſſion for you, which I now frankly own? can you endeavour to make uſe of the ſincereſt, honeſteſt, and tendereſt affection, to the ruin of her who bears it to you? I need not tell you how willingly I would have ſacrificed my all,—how eagerly I would have done, or ſuffer'd any thing for you; and would you ſacrifice my eternal guilt, my ſpotleſs fame, my unguarded innocence, to the ſatisfaction of an appetite which every common proſtitute may ſerve?

Young VALENCE.

Every moment I ſee you, every word you utter, adds new fuel to my flame.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Think of the injury you do me, and the leaſt drop of humanity will cool the hotteſt paſſion.

Young VALENCE.

Think of the bliſs I am to enjoy.

Miſs BONCOUR.

And would you enjoy it to my ruin? O conſider thoſe tedious miſerable hours which I muſt ſuffer for the momentary bliſs you will poſſeſs! behold me abandoned by my father, deſerted by my relations, denied by my acquaintance, ſhun'd, ſlighted, ſcorn'd by all the world! ſee me in the horrors of this ſtate, and think 'twas you who brought me to it; 'twas you who plunged me into this ſcene of miſery that creature who would not, to have gain'd the treaſures of the world, have done an act to deſtroy your quiet; conſider this and anſwer me, Could you enjoy any happineſs at the price of my eternal ruin?

Young VALENCE.

O, can you aſk it? let us not think beyond the preſent moment.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Hold———thou loweſt, meaneſt, and moſt abject villain, think not this trial was made to recover your love.

love: O, no! this morning I ſaw,—I deſpiſed the baſeneſs of your heart, and bore your hated preſence thoſe few moments but to expoſe you. Open the door.

Young VALENCE.

Ha! damnation!

Enter BONCOUR, VALENCE, *and the reſt.*

VALENCE.

O, monſtrous! Nothing but my own ears could have made me give credit to it: you will outwit your father, Sir; your father will outwit you of every farthing, I can tell you; I'll diſinherit you this afternoon, and turn you out like a vagabond as you are.

Young VALENCE.

Death and deſpair! I'am ruin'd for ever.

(*Exit Young Valence.*

VALENCE.

Not one penny, nor one ſingle farthing ſhall he ever have of mine.

BONCOUR.

My daughter, my dear child! as much now the object of my admiration, as this morning of my love.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Thou beſt of men, it ſhall be the buſineſs of my future days, to be your comfort only.

Enter Sir GEORGE, *Sir* GREGORY, *and Young* KENNEL.

Sir GREGORY.

You are a civil man, indeed, neighbour, to have one in your own houſe—What, do you grudge your wine?

BONCOUR.

You'll pardon me, Sir Gregory, I had a little buſineſs; beſides, I am not able to drink, and my brother there is your match.

Sir GREGORY.

As to the buſineſs, that's a lie, I believe; and if you can't drink, what a plague are you good for: but come, is this my god-daughter? Here, ſirrah, where are you; this is the lady you are to have: come, let one ſee you fall to making love: let us ſee a little of the fruits of your travels.

Young KENNEL.

Sir, I am ſo ſurpriz'd! nor know I whether to thank you or fortune.

Sir GREGORY.

I know you had rather thank any body than your father, you raſcal; but this is the lady whom I found out for you, you dog.

Young KENNEL.

And this is the lady for whom alone I refus'd to be obedient, not knowing who your choice was.

VALENCE.

Hah! what's that, what's that?

Miſs BONCOUR.

With your leave, I would be excus'd at preſent, Sir.

BONCOUR.

No, no, my dear, pray ſtay, do not diſoblige Sir Gregory; you may truſt me, that I ſhall not force your inclinations.

Sir GREGORY.

Come, begin, ſirrah, begin.

Enter Young BONCOUR.

Young BONCOUR.

Sir, Mr. Recorder, your lawyer, is in the next room, and waits to execute the deed.

BONCOUR.

My heart, my eyes overflow with tenderneſs, for ſo much goodneſs; ſure 'tis a ſenſation almoſt worthy to be bought

bought with ruin: but, oh! what happineſs muſt be mine, who, while I hear theſe inſtances of my children's goodneſs, can aſſure them my fortune wants not ſo dear a reputation. The ſtory was your uncle's invention; the reaſon for it I will tell you anon: no, my ſon, tho' perhaps I may not much increaſe, I ſhall be at leaſt a faithful ſteward of my wife's fortune to her children.

VALENCE.

How, Mr. Boncour! is this poſſible?

BONCOUR.

It is true, indeed, neighbour.

VALENCE.

Indeed, neighbour, I am very glad of it; and what was this only a jeſt of Sir George's!

BONCOUR.

Even ſo.

VALENCE.

I am extremely happy in hearing it, and will, if you pleaſe, make this a memorable æra in the happineſs of our children. I ſpeak not of my ſon, I will abandon him, and give all I am worth to my daughter, and give that daughter to your ſon.

Young BONCOUR.

You will pardon me, Mr. Valence; but, had I been reduc'd to the loweſt degree of diſtreſs, I would not have accepted of your daughter with any fortune ſhe could have brought.

VALENCE.

How, Sir!

Young BONCOUR.

She will, if ſhe relate to you faithfully her behaviour to me this day, leſſen your ſurpriſe at what I ſay.

VALENCE.

I will go home, turn my daughter out of doors, diſinherit my ſon, give my eſtate to build an hoſpital, and

then hang myſelf up at the next charitable tree I can find.

Sir GEORGE.

Mr. Valence, Mr. Valence! I have ſpoke to my brother about that eſtate that lies ſo contiguous to your's, and when it is to be ſold, you ſhall certainly have the refuſal of it.

VALENCE.

What, am I mock'd, ſcoff'd, ah! zounds! I ſhall run mad.

(*Exit Valence.*

Young KENNEL.

Madam, I have ſeen a great deal of the world; but all the women I have ſeen, are no more comparable to you, than the ſmalleſt chapel in London is to the church of Notre Dame.

Miſs BONCOUR.

Ha! ha! ha!

Sir GREGORY. (*To Boncour.*)

Why ſhould there go ſo many words to a bargain: let us have the wedding directly.

Sir GEORGE.

Wedding, directly! what, do you think you are coupling ſome of your animals in the country? Do you think that a union of bodies is all that is requiſite in a ſtate, wherein there can be no happineſs without a union of minds too? Go, and redeem paſt time: your ſon is not yet too old to learn: employ ſome able man to cultivate the ſhare of underſtanding that nature gave him; to weed out all the follies and fopperies that he has pick'd up in the tour of Europe, as he calls it: then, when he appears to be a rational creature, and not till then, let him pay his addreſſes to my niece.

Young KENNEL.

So, then, I find I am not a rational creature! and faith, I begin to think ſo myſelf. And whoſe fault was that,

that, father, but your's, that did not give me a rational education.

Sir GREGORY.

Why, you dog, I gave you the ſame education I had myſelf: would you have had a better education than your father, ſirrah? But did not I ſend you, beſides, to travel, to finiſh your education? and when an education is finiſh'd, is not that enough? what ſignifies what the beginning was? But never fear them, Greg; with ſuch an education as I had, I got twenty thouſand pounds with my wife; and you who have travelled may, I think, expect more. Never fear 'em, boy, the acres, the acres will do the buſineſs.

Sir GEORGE.

There you may find yourſelf miſtaken; for I have ſome dirty acres to add to my niece's fortune that may chance to weigh againſt your ſcale. Her behaviour this day has pleas'd me; and I never will conſent to ſee her wedded to any one, who has not underſtanding enough to know her value.

Young KENNEL.

Oh! heavens! I'll do any thing to mend my underſtanding rather than loſe the only woman I can love; and tho' I have hated books as I do the devil, if that be the only way to improve it, I'll pore my eyes out rather than loſe her.

BONCOUR.

Why, this muſt be a work of time; and whenever you render yourſelf worthy of her, you may have a chance to ſucceed.

Enter Servant.

SERVANT.

Sir, my lady has ſent me to acquaint your honour, that ſupper is on table.

BONCOUR.

We will attend her.

(*Exit Servant.*

Sir

Sir GEORGE.

Well, brother, I think you begin to find already the good effects of my advice to you: your wife, you ſee, civilly ſends in, inſtead of ruſhing herſelf into company with her ſcream of, "why muſt not I be let into the ſecret?"

BONCOUR.

Sir George, I thank you; and am now convinc'd, that a little exertion of a proper authority on my part, will ſoon make my wife act like a rational woman.

Sir GEORGE.

Well, George, your behaviour this day has, I confeſs, wiped away ſome part of the very bad opinion I had of you; and if you will caſt off your follies, and turn away your wench, I have a wife in view for you, the ſame that your father intended to propoſe, who will make you amends for the one you have loſt: and in that caſe, to make you more worthy of her, I don't care if I ſettle the beſt part of my eſtate on you.

Young BONCOUR.

Sir, I know that profeſſions, on ſuch occaſions, often paſs only for words of courſe; but you will ſee, by a total reformation of my paſt conduct, that the whole ſtudy of my life hereafter ſhall be to pleaſe ſo generous an uncle, and ſo good a father.

Sir GEORGE.

What a variety of ſtrange events has this day produced! I can't help thinking, that they might furniſh out a good ſubject for a comedy.

BONCOUR.

Only a cataſtrophe would be wanting; becauſe you know it is a conſtant rule, that comedies ſhould end in a marriage.

Sir

Sir GEORGE.

That's true; but if the reformer, who is to repreſent your character, ſhould only ſtep forward at the end, and make a ſmooth ſpeech or ſo, an Engliſh audience is generally ſo good natur'd, that they would paſs over that, and all the other faults that might be in the piece, for the ſake of the Good-Natur'd Man.

Erratum: The Folio from 64 ſhould begin 65, inſtead of 49.

FINIS.

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